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THE DEAF MUSICIAN.

I SEE a lark in the far summer sky,
My darling seated at her harp I see,
Playing the while our little children sing :
The world is full of music — not for me !

I dreamed last night of some dim abbey choir :
The lights were burning where the singers
stood
Chanting my anthem. I crouched in the dark,
Weeping for joy to hear they called it good !

O music of my sleep, that mocks my soul
With cruel joys that are fulfilled no more
Than his who dreams of light and love at
home,
And wakes to find himself on Arctic shore !

It haunts me always through my silent days,
With life before me like a closed gate.
If God had only bidden me to die, —
Or anything but this hard work — to wait !

To wait and work, and know my work but as
Some poor fond mother from her infant reft,
Shuts the sweet memory safe from change and
time,
And dreams to find her boy the babe she left !

And yet there is a thought will sometimes
creep —
It even mingled in my dream last night —
I'd rather make my music in the dark,
Than only stand and sing it in the light !

Maybe the dream is nearer truth than sound,
And could I hear my tune, mine eyes might
miss
Some of the sweetness soaring in my soul :
Better go wanting that, and having this !

And there are songs in heaven. God forgive
A poor deaf man for wondering what they
are.

Perchance it is their echo that I catch,
And I shall hear those same songs sweeter
far !

Good Words. ISABELLA FVIE MAYO.

THE DYING YEAR.

THE year is dying, soberly the trees
Are mellowing — with a dull sad face
They lean against the sadness of the sky :
The glory of the summer has gone by,
Gone is the smile of gladness from the place.

O sad to see the sun come later up,
And sad to see him pass betimes away,
And sad the pallid glints he throws across
The leaf-strewn garden ; sad the sense of loss,
The all-pervading fragrance of decay.

Yet at the open window, as I sit
With closed eyes, and hear the gentle rain
Fall on the damp green earth like lovers' sighs,
And feel the breath of earth uprise
From far and near, from hillock and from plain,

The same soft drip of lightly falling showers,
Upon the moss-greens growing everywhere,
The same strange stilly warmth in the lift,
The cawing of the rooks, the gentle drift
Of odorous distillings in the air,

Daffodils growing on the field's green breast,
Buds all a-blow, and the enchanted breath
Of violets peeping in the damp hedgerow,
Kindled to being — O mystery, that so
Death looks like life, and life so like to death !
Sunday Magazine. C. C. FRASER TYTLER.

THE JOY OF INCOMPLETENESS.

IF all our lives were one broad glare
Of sunlight, clear, unclouded ;
If all our path were smooth and fair,
By no soft gloom enshrouded ;
If all life's flowers were fully blown
Without the sweet unfolding,
And happiness were rudely thrown
On hands too weak for holding —
Should we not miss the twilight hours,
The gentle haze and sadness ?
Should we not long for storms and showers,
To break the constant gladness ?

If none were sick and none were sad,
What service could we render ?
I think if we were always glad,
We scarcely could be tender
Did our beloved never need
Our patient ministration,
Earth would grow cold, and miss indeed
Its sweetest consolation ;
If sorrow never claimed our heart,
And every wish were granted,
Patience would die, and hope depart —
Life would be disenchanted.

And yet in heaven is no more night,
In heaven is no more sorrow !
Such unimagined new delight
Fresh grace from pain will borrow —
As the poor seed that underground
Seeks its true life above it,
Not knowing what will there be found
When sunbeams kiss and love it.
So we in darkness upward grow,
And look and long for heaven,
But cannot picture it below,
Till more of light be given.

Sunday Magazine.

J. BESEMERES.

From The Quarterly Review.

WILLIAM BORLASE, ST. AUBYN, AND POPE.*

SINCE, in the year 1859, the people of Truro looked for the last time on the mail coach from Plymouth as it rattled over the pavement of their ancient and cleanly borough up to the door of the Royal Hotel, and since Brunel, by spanning the Tamar with the Albert Bridge, placed in the power of thousands *per diem* to cross the waters of separation between Cornwall and the rest of the world, and thereby to perform a feat which the devil of the western "drolls" had till then been unable to accomplish, that county may truly be said to have obtained from her visitors a share of attention such as fairly to make her the envy of the most favoured district in England. Armed with a ticket for Penzance, the tourist discovered that beyond the old red sandstone of Devon, and that warm southern seaboard he already knew so well, there lay a country possessed of attractions by no means to be overlooked. Wayside inns expanded themselves into hotels to receive him, and lodgings were advertised to be let in places unheard of before. Small fishing-villages bade fair to become attractive watering-places, and in short, "West Barbary," as it had been called — barbarous no more — was on all hands admitted into the list of those localities which must be "done." Nor were artists long in finding out for themselves snuggeries along this same Cornish coast; and thus, year by year, the walls of the Academy recall to our mind's eye, with a truthfulness of colour seldom to be mistaken, the blocks of rough grey granite capped with golden lichen, which form the foreground to a depth of blue and green and purple, such as those alone can realize who, seated on the summit of the cliffs, have gazed down on those waters of the Atlantic, as a genial summer day draws onward to its close. And authors, too, have found their way thither; for how many times has not the note-book been ransacked for illustrations of Cornish folk-lore, manners and customs, inhabitants past and present — some to figure as

quaint realities, some as playful caricatures in the pages of the next propitious magazine?

Apart, however, from what may be said of Cornwall, or pictured of her scenery by travellers who pay her but a cursory visit, there yet remains, for those who care to probe the surface a little deeper, a storehouse of material connected with her literary history in the past, known only to the few, locked away perhaps with family papers in the office strong-room, or lying disregarded on the shelves of the private library. It has so happened — whether it be due to the affectionate regard entertained by every Cornishman for the honour of his ancient "kingdom," or to the real interest attaching to the subject itself, or to both these causes combined — that Cornwall can lay claim to a greater number of native historians than any other county in the British Isles. From the time of the father of her history, Richard Carew of Antonie, who published his "Survey" in 1602, down to the present day, there have never been wanting men of application, not to say of ability, located in the county itself, to whom the study of their *natale solum* — its natural productions, its language and antiquities — has at once been a life-work and a delight. Names like Hals and Tonkin, Gwavas and Scawen, Whitaker and Polwhele, Davies Gilbert and his namesake C. S. Gilbert, Hichens and Drew, not to speak of those who have followed in more recent times, remind us of the fact that, even over and above what has been printed of their works, there may yet remain, if they have not yet reached the market, amongst the papers of their descendants, masses of unpublished MSS. — the fruit of lives of untiring assiduity. It is to a MS. collection of this kind that we propose to call attention in the following pages. Foremost, perhaps, in a list of Cornish historians would be placed a name, omitted above, that of William Borlase. Born in 1698, and dying in 1772, his MSS. extend over the half-century which follows the year 1720. Their interest for the general reader lies not so much in their reference to Cornwall, although to the elucidation of her history they all more or less directly

* MS. Collections at Castle Horneck. 1720-1772.

tend, as in the light they throw upon the state of society at the time, and above all in the introduction they afford us to the literary and scientific world—to men, for instance, of such varied genius as Sir John St. Aubyn, Alexander Pope, John Frederic Gronov of Leyden, Linnæus, Lyttelton, bishop of Carlisle, Pococke, bishop of Ossory, Milles, dean of Exeter, and Thomas Pennant. Of the original correspondence of these and others, which, together with three volumes of copied answers, is contained in no less than nine volumes in all, we may add that it has never seen the light since the day it was first sewn together more than a century ago. It is to the contents of these volumes that we shall principally confine ourselves at present. Amongst the other MSS. in the collection may be mentioned three closely written folios, treating respectively of the parochial history, the heraldry and genealogy, and the ancient language of Cornwall; the first of these being especially valuable, from the fact that it contains extracts from that portion of the Hals MS. which was never published, and is usually supposed to have been lost at the printer's. Following these we may notice a volume entitled "*Collectanea*," being extracts from other writers bearing on the antiquities and natural history of Cornwall, a volume of drawings of churches, rude stone monuments, etc., and a curious cosmical treatise, ready for the press, entitled "*Private Thoughts on the Creation and the Deluge*." After these come portfolios, meteorological observations, dissertations on scriptural and political subjects, notes on excursions, etc.; forming in all a collection of upwards of forty bound volumes, in addition to letters and tracts. The whole series may indeed be said to be a noble monument to a life which, though passed in seclusion, was one of unceasing mental energy; at a period too when books were scarce, public libraries in the country unknown, and the world in general offering few inducements to the student to persevere in so laborious a course. Such extracts from this mass of material as we have thought fit to make, we had at first intended to set before the reader one by one, like beads without a

string; but we have since found it more convenient to arrange them systematically by attaching them to a cursory memoir of their collector, by introducing one or two short biographical sketches of his contemporaries, and by adding such notes as may serve to illustrate the manners of the west country at the time of which we speak.

William Borlase was born, as we have said, in 1698, at Pendeen, in the parish of St. Just. His father was the representative of an "ancient family of gentlemen," as Hals calls them, settled in Cornwall soon after the Conquest, and deriving their origin, according to Upton, from one Taffer or Taillefer, who had the honour of striking the first blow on the eve of the battle of Hastings. His mother was Lydia Harris, of Hayne, a daughter of that old Devonian house who traced through the Nevilles and Bouchiers direct from King Edward III. He was sent, as he tells us in an autobiographical letter, "early to school at Penzance, where his master used to say he could learn but did not." Thence "more to his improvement he was removed in the year 1709 to the care of the Rev. Wm. Bedford, a learned schoolmaster at Plymouth," and thence, three years after, to Exeter College, Oxford. Of the state of that university during the time he was there, some idea may be formed from the diary of Tom Hearne, but meanwhile we may insert one extract from a letter written by Borlase himself to a pupil just going to Oxford in the year 1745, which quaintly illustrates the state of things thirty years before:—

When I was at Oxford in the year 1715 [he says] we, I mean pupils, tutors, barbers, shoe-cleaners, and bed-makers, minded nothing but politics; the Muse stood neglected, nay, meat and drink, balls and ladies, had all reason to complain in their turns that we minded Scotland and Preston more than the humane, softer and more delicate entertainments of Genius and Philosophy. This was a most unhappy time, and I have often lamented it, and it has given me more pains since than I could at that time much better undergo. I hope all the several members of my Alma Mater are much wiser and better employed at present than to mind things which will go as they list, notwithstanding all the heroic struggles and zealous clubbings of the college or the tavern, and I

think if I were back again in 1715, and in my undergraduate's gown, I should let the antagonists quietly take their fate, and not go once to coffee-house to know who had the best on't. For if I can see anything in our English history 'tis that the poor nation is always the worse for alterations, 'tho' particular persons may be the better, that is, the richer or more powerful.

The ladies, however, as it seems, had not long to complain of this excessive *penchant* for politics among the undergraduates of 1715; for very shortly after the time of which this letter speaks, we find a young lady "whose good sense excels her person and whose good humour exceeds both," expressing her regret that owing to the "indisputable commands of a rigid father," she is obliged to "deny Mr. Borlase her company at a coming dance," "entirely contrary to her own inclinations."

A year or two after, the Cornishmen at Exeter College (at that time the home of all west-countrymen), received an accession to their number, in the person of the young Sir John St. Aubyn. Several years younger than Borlase, a friendship sprang up between the two fellow-countrymen, which continued unbroken until the death of the former. Four years later, in 1722, having finished their university career, they proceeded together to London and thence to Cornwall. In the following extract Borlase gives an account of their journey in a letter addressed to an old lady of fashion in London—Mrs. Delahaye, of Delahaye Street, Westminster. It is in itself a fair specimen of the quaint humour combined with elegance which makes the most trivial correspondence of the period such a fascinating study:—

Madam [it begins], as fond as I am of the permission you gave me to write to you, I should not be so insensible to the rules of decency, but that I should make a great many apologies for being so bold as to trouble you with this, did I not think that the great importance of several adventures we met with in our journey would be a sufficient excuse to persons of much less curiosity than your ladyship. I am sure, if rising as unwillingly as any lady in town, if being as long at breakfast, setting out at last and jogging on till dinner-time; mutton-steaks, fowls, geese, etc., mount-

ing again and continuing on till darkness and good stomachs made us resolve to go to supper and to bed, till waking next morning we began to act over those important parts again, and so on for five or six days following; I say if such a series of new and unheard of passages be not an entertainment sufficient to recommend itself, either the world must be grown very ill-natured, or I must be very trifling. I could tell you of drinking coffee one morning, and the next strong beer, nutmeg, and toast; I might from hence make a natural transition to buttered ale or mulled wine, and to show you that our journey was not without its varieties, I might expatiate on the several beauties we met with in a curious lantern at Blandford. As variety is likewise one of the most agreeable things in the world, I might likewise inform you of an accurate pedlar's accosting us with abundance of pleasantries, and giving himself (for our sakes) a great deal of trouble to prove that we had four miles and a half to our inn, when other persons were of opinion we had but three. Sometimes we met with a landlord in men's clothes, but for the most part we discovered that the men had dropt their prerogative, and we found the supreme authority over the inns lodged in gowns and petticoats. Ordered by Sir John not to write one word of the pretty black ey'd girl at Bridport, but to go on with the particulars of our journey, I think I am at liberty to tell you of a misfortune which happened to me at Launceston. As we were passing through that fatal town (I am heartily sorry I have forgot what day of the month 'twas), but, however, as we were passing through, whom should we see at the door of an inn but our landlord's daughter. Whether Sir John was dry and thirsty or not I can't tell, but we all agreed to take our pint at the door, and being men of no little gallantry because just come from town, we were talking very smartly, as you may imagine, to the girl who filled the wine, when all of a sudden, my unfortunate eyes happened to fix upon a green ribbon that hung playing to-and-fro with the air a little lower than it should. As I was the only person that discovered it, I told the lady I was apprehensive she would loose that pretty ribbon if she did not withdraw. I was then on horseback, and, to my great confusion, had not the presence of mind to alight and take care of it myself, upon which Sir John has so teased and bantered me that I have had no rest ever since. I beg you would write Sir John, and let him know that such a misfortune deserves rather pity than upbraidings. And now, madam, I suppose you are almost as tired with

our journey as we are, or (to go as far as possible with the comparison) as three of Sir John's horses which we left upon the road. It is now time to begin to be serious, and to ask pardon for troubling you with these impertinencies, which will leave the work-basket so long idle, or perhaps may loose poor Dickey his breakfast. If it should leave the harpsicord silent but for one minute I should never forgive myself.

Such was the pleasurable side of a journey from London to the Land's End in the year 1722; but travelling in those days had a dangerous one too. In Cornwall itself, such was the honesty of the inhabitants, the class known as highwaymen or gentlemen-lifters seems to have been almost unknown; but from Honiton Hill in Devon to the outskirts of the metropolis, there was not an open heath or lonely spot on the road which was not infested by them. Indeed, the difficulties of intercommunication between Cornwall and the rest of the world which existed then can scarcely be realized nowadays. A second letter, for instance, was almost invariably despatched, if the matter were of importance, containing the same news as the first—so great were the chances of miscarriage. Nor was the sea a surer means of transport. Over and over again we read in these letters, of cargoes of books or minerals on their way to and from Cornwall being captured, much to the edification of the Spaniards on board the privateers. In the present instance, however, the two friends completed their journey in safety; the one proceeding to his seat at Clowance, and the other to his father's house at Pendeen in the parish of St. Just.

This old manor-house of Pendeen deserves a passing notice. Here in the reign of Henry VII. lived Richard Pendyne, one of those rebels who under Lord Audley, Flammock and Joseph, after dismantling "Tyhyddy,"* the house of John Bassett, the high-sheriff, and doing other mischief in the west, marched on London to the terror of the inhabitants in the year 1491. For the part that he (Pendyne) took in the battle of the "felde called the blak heth,"† he was attainted of high treason, and his daughter Jane obliged to make over her inheritance to one John Thomas, sergeant-at-arms, who was probably her father's captor. Neither did the historical associations of this old house end here. One of the ancestors of the subject of this memoir had troopers quar-

tered on him in the time of the civil war by Fairfax, his crime being that he had assisted a cousin to raise a troop of horse for the king. Of this very troop, commanded by Colonel Nicholas Borlase, the following adventure is told. Being on one occasion "much pressed by the Puritan forces, and making a running flight, he set fire to a large brake of furze in the night, which the enemy taking for the fires made on the approach of the king's army, immediately fled with great precipitation, and left him both bag and baggage, which he seized the next morning."

No sooner had the peaceful times of the Restoration set in than the west-country gentlemen devoted themselves to the improvement of their lands and the rebuilding of their houses. It is curious to notice how many quaint old gabled homesteads, now farmhouses, but once the residences of the lords of the soil, with their low-arched door-cases, square-headed mulion windows and picturesque chimney-clusters, date from this period. Such an one is the present house at Pendeen in which William Borlase was born. Treeless and desolate in the extreme are the "crofts" by which it is surrounded; yet in those days there was no reason to complain of them, since under their rough exterior lay a fair mineral treasure, from which, before expensive machinery and elaborate prospectuses had been invented for the destruction of "up-country" mine-adventurers, the landowner might derive a sure and certain and not always scanty profit. Thus, in the beginning of the last century, these Cornish landlords frequently carried on mines at their own private risk; the frugal fare of the workmen, and the consequent low rate of wages, rendering the employment of a considerable number of hands quite within the compass of any man of moderate means. And thus it was that every Saturday, as sure as the weeks went by, a troop of miners and "bal girls," with William Borlase's father (John of Pendyne as he was called) riding at their head, might have been seen wending their way to Penzance along the green track which led thither from St. Just, to receive their wages for work done at one or other of the mines carried on by him. While on the subject of Borlase's father, and as it bears rather curiously on the state of society in the country at this time, we may be permitted to insert, though it does not seem much to his credit, the following draft of a petition to Parliament for leave to prosecute a member of the House of Commons, he being at

* Extract from the lost MS. of Hals.

† Borlase deeds.

that time M.P. for St. Ives. It runs as follows:—

HONOURED SIRS,

Life the precious tenet of mankind forceth me to inform your honours that Sunday, the 26th of February, 1709, in full view of most of the congregation of Madder, John Borlase, one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace, did wilfully break the peace by striking me almost to ground with his staff, and if not timely prevented by one Paul Tonkin, he would have been striking me again. He did at the same time highly threaten me, with Christr. Harris, Esqre., Jane his wife, and John his son. Mr. Harris ordered his servant to beat me. Of the truth of the above information I am ready to give my corroboration. Humbly craving the Honable Speaker and House of Commons not to skreene such daring offenders, but to give me leave to prosecute them as the law directs, is the humble prayer of, Honrd Sirs, yours in all humility and duty—

FRANCIS ST. AUBYN.

What this gentleman had done to deserve the justice's justice thus summarily inflicted on him, there and then, in the midst as it seems of divine service, by the occupant of the next pew, we are left to conjecture.

It is time, however, to turn from anecdotes of the father to follow the steps of his fourth son, William, who, having been ordained previous to his return to Cornwall, now took up his residence at his newly acquired rectory of Ludgvan to which he had been presented by Charles Duke of Bolton. The seclusion of this place must have seemed dreary enough after the excitement of Oxford and the glimpse of London life. Luckily his fondness for a garden came to his rescue. "My predecessor," he says, "that he might not confine the fancies of those that should come after him, left me nothing but a plot, with a full liberty to dispose of a large possession of briars and thorns, as I thought fit, without any danger of spoiling the shape or design of a former garden." So engrossing did the pursuit become of watching this wild place, making some pretensions towards order and neatness, that it was "with the greatest reluctance," he tells us, "that I could leave the diggers and delvers, and withdraw into my study to Horace and Dryden." The charm of this beautiful spot, in addition to its great fertility, was the lovely prospect that lay at its feet. "In one of the most retired corners of this pleasant bay" (we quote from his description of the place to Sir John St. Aubyn), "which Horace would have celebrated with more songs than he

has his beloved Tybur, or his much inferior Baiae, stands that mount, which is happy in its situation, but happier in the affection of its owner." The pleasant and genial society by which he was surrounded was another circumstance which served to reconcile him to Ludgvan. "The gentry," he says, "are of a free, frolicking disposition. In the summer-time we meet (some ten or a dozen) at a bowling-green. There we have built a little pleasure-house and there we dine; after dinner play at bowls; and so by frequently meeting together we are, as it were, like so many brothers of one family, so united and so glad to see the one the other." The original agreement by which this club was formed in 1719 is still extant, as also is a copy of verses in the Cornish language written by William Gwavas, one of the members, in honour of the occasion. The fine for non-attendance every Friday at dinner was one shilling. The value of a meeting of this kind at a time when party spirit ran so high, and the slightest insult was cause sufficient for a duel, can hardly be overestimated. It was there that private differences were made up; and it was there that uniformity of opinion was procured throughout the neighbourhood in general on all matters respecting the public good, or that tended to local improvement at the time. "And thus," writes Borlase to an old friend, "between my own gardens and my neighbours' frolicks, I have been perfectly idle ever since I have been in the country;" but, he continues, "the time will come when I shall make amends for these days of carelessness, and when the neatness of my retirement shall fix me to my studies, and make me in love with reading and meditation."

Meanwhile several hints in letters to friends at the close of 1723 prepare us for the event of the following year, namely, his marriage. Thus we find him conveying a request, "in the name of some ladies," to Sir John St. Aubyn, "that the hall at the Mount may be planked for dancing." A little later on he writes to a friend, "I have not time to write you anything of the fair sex, but I really think that Cornwall is not without its beauties, of which I shall write you more at large." A few weeks more and he was actually moralizing in a serious vein on the subject of matrimony. "To form," he says, "a just notion of matrimony from what the gay and gallant people of the town think of it, would be as absurd as to judge Horace by the opinion of a linen-draper,

or to go to the Exchange to inquire after trade in Pall-Mall." Of all the west-country beauties who graced with their presence the ball-room at St. Michael's Mount, his choice fell upon Anne, sole surviving daughter of the Rev. William Smith, rector of the parishes of Camborne and Illogan. In this young lady, whose full blue eyes still smile from the canvas where her husband's pencil placed them, he found one whose amiability of disposition, and scrupulous attention to domestic matters, rendered her at one and the same time a cheerful companion and an excellent clergyman's wife.

We must now turn away for a moment from the pleasant scenes at Ludgvan, and follow the friend of college days as he enters the chapel at St. Stephen's,—the youngest member, perhaps, of that distinguished assembly. Born in the year 1700, Sir John St. Aubyn was only just of age, when in 1722 he was returned to Parliament for his native county. Different indeed, yet in one respect alike, had been the destinies of the friends since we left them after their journey in the beginning of the year. Parting, the one to mix in the affairs of State in times the most perplexing, the other to the peaceful seclusion of his country parsonage, each had nevertheless marked out for himself a path of equal mental activity. That the confidence of his country, though entrusted to so young a man, had not been misplaced may be judged from many an extract in the correspondence before us. Thus a gentleman writing from London, March 2nd, 1726, observes: "Sir R— this session has met with a strong opposition in the House of Commons; Sir John St. Aubyn has gained a great reputation in that house, and the opinions of our politicians in relation to war or peace are as different as their faces." A year or two later an incident in Cornish history gave him an opportunity of making himself more than ever beloved at home. In 1727, when, as Hume tells us, "the courts of France and Spain were perfectly reconciled, and all Europe was freed from the calamities of war," the peace of Great Britain was disturbed by tumults amongst the tinnners of Cornwall, "who, being provoked by a scarcity of corn, rose in arms and plundered the granaries of the county." At this time it happened that Sir John had just completed a new pier at the Mount, to facilitate the exportation of tin, which was shipped in large quantities at that place. The consequence was that the tinnners congregated there in considerable

numbers; the place became a rendezvous for malcontents, and fresh riots broke out. Very serious consequences were apprehended, and what might actually have happened none can say, had it not been that the magnanimous spirit and unselfish patriotism of the young statesman showed itself in a measure of local policy which doubly endeared him to his countrymen. He "forthwith advanced a considerable sum of money to the tinnners, by which they were saved from starving or the necessity of plundering their neighbours." "Constant in his attendance and application to the business of the House of Commons," writes Borlase in a note attached to the St. Aubyn pedigree, "he soon learnt to speak well, but spoke seldom, and never but on points of consequence. He was heard with pleasure by his friends, and with respect by others." In 1734 he seconded the repeal of the Septennial Act, in a speech which will be found in the handy-books of British eloquence. In this same year a curious incident occurred in the neighbourhood of his seat at Clowance, with which Sir John was only indirectly connected in his capacity of justice of the peace, but which was ultimately attended with very serious consequences to himself and his family. A certain Henry Rogers, by trade a pewterer, having some fancied claim to an estate called Skewis, seized the manor-house, and surrounding himself with a band of cut-throats, organized a rebellion on his own account, and bade defiance to the country round. Having beaten off from his house, not without bloodshed, first the sheriff, next the constables, and finally the military themselves, the villain succeeded in making good his escape. He was subsequently arrested at Salisbury and brought to Launceston for trial, where the grand jury found five bills of murder against him, and Lord Chief Justice Hardwick publicly returned thanks to Sir John "for his steady endeavours to bring him to justice." The terror, however, which this ruffian caused in the neighbourhood can scarcely be realized nowadays; and the menacing letters received by Lady St. Aubyn so preyed upon her mind, that they brought on a "sensible decay," or as we should call it now a rapid decline, from the effects of which in 1740 she died.

With the death of his wife Sir John's interest in country life came to an end, and leaving his son to the care and instruction of his old friend at Ludgvan, he set out for a foreign land. Meanwhile, however, the Parliamentary horizon was rapidly clouding over: a crisis was clearly immi-

nent; and, on his return to England, it was to find that, for the present at least, his sorrow must be drowned in more work, in a redoubled attention to those duties which his early reputation now pointed to him to fulfil. And thus, as the Walpole administration draws on to its close, the figure of Sir John St. Aubyn — the “little baronet” as he was called — comes prominently to the front as one of the most vigorous, as he certainly was the most conscientious, of the opponents of the then unpopular prime minister. On the subject of the vote of thanks, including an approbation of the manner in which the Spanish war had been prosecuted, which was carried by a small majority in the House of Commons early in 1741, he writes (April 9th) as follows: — “I believe ye Folks in ye Country are very much puzzled abt many of our Proceedings, and I don't wonder at yr doubts about that unseasonable vote of Innocence; especially when ye Opportunity was so fairly given, wch ye Nation has been so long expecting us to take ye advantage of.” But the country party the while felt that no opportunity must be lost, and no vigour spared in the attack. Contrast the tone of the following extract from a letter dated May 5th, and note how the space of one single month had served to fan the flame. Sir John now inveighs against “such Insolence in Administration, such wantonness in Power, wch surely nothing could produce but that mistaken vote of Innocence wch so lately happen'd. And yet,” he continues, “this is ye Man agt whom we want evidence to advise his Removal, when at my very door there are such glaring Proofs, which, in less corrupt times, would deprive Him of his Head.” Day by day the enemies of the ministry acquired fresh strength: the elections went against the court interest, even Westminster returning two members hostile to it. Walpole tottered on the brink of ruin, and had it not been that, during a short adjournment of the House early in 1742, he had resigned his offices and been elevated to the peerage, he might, as we know, even have been committed to the Tower.

No sooner had Parliament reassembled than a measure was brought in by Lord Limerick, and seconded by Sir John St. Aubyn, to inquire into the conduct of the last twenty years. This was lost by two votes, but another, also proposed by Lord Limerick on the 23rd of March, for an inquiry into the conduct of Robert, Earl of Orford, was carried, and a select committee appointed by ballot. And now came

Sir John's political triumph. To this committee he was appointed by every vote in the House of Commons, to the number of 518 — “an honour,” says the MS. from which we quote, “neither then nor before (as far as the Records of Parliament can reach) ever conferred on any member, as Mr. Speaker Onslow on the spot observed to Sir John's great commendation.” “When the Committee was appointed he declined the offer of the Chair, and Lord Viscount Limerick was chosen Chairman.” The following is an extract from a letter of Sir John's, dated from the Secret Committee Chamber, June 22nd, 1742: —

We are now [he writes] winding up our bottoms as well as we can under ye disabillitys which we have been fetter'd with, notwithstanding which, we shall show the world enough to convince if not convict. I am sorry there has been so much unconcern in ye Gentlemen of our country; I wish I cd say in some an unconcern only. We have had, and I wish we mayn't forever now have lost, ye only opportunity which may happen to retrieve ye Honour and establish ye Natural Institutions of ye Country. . . . The Town is in high spirits at present, upon the accounts we have from Germany and Italy. This turn is not owing to ye merit of ye new Administration, but to ye Vigour of this Parliament, which has had It's free Operation during this Inter-Regnum of Power, and whenever that happens, England must have It's due Influence upon ye Continent; and if she had acted as she ought for some years past, what might have been brought about, when ye bare expectation of her acting has produc'd such great events?

“About this time,” says Borlase, “Sir John being offer'd to take place as one of the Lords of the Admiralty, he was ready, he said, to serve his King and country, but would take no place unless upon the express condition that his freedom and independency in Parliament should remain unquestion'd and uncontroll'd. These were not times to endure, much less shake hands with such inflexible Virtue; as he coveted no place, he never had one, 'though capable of any.'”

On the 31st of March, 1744, when war was declared with France, the inhabitants of Mount's Bay became alarmed for the safety of their trade. Two things were required: a stationary armed vessel to protect their shores and fisheries from privateers (for three of the principal fishermen had already been taken prisoners), and a cruiser to convoy the exports and imports necessary for working the mines. For the part he took in obtaining these advantages Sir John received the thanks

of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, assembled as usual in their parliament at the bowling-green at Marazion. St. Michael's Mount he had restored from a ruined monastic cell to a comfortable dwelling-house; but he never lived to visit it again, dying of fever at Pencarrow on his way home in the year 1744, at the early age of forty-four, "to the great regret of all who knew him, and to his country's loss of a most faithful friend." "The dignity of this ancient family," writes Borlase in the brief memoir attached to his pedigree, "owes much to this gentleman;" and Dr. Oliver of Bath, in a letter of sympathy on the occasion of his death, speaks of him as "one who had bravely withstood all the temptations that honours or profit could lay in his way, and dared to stand almost single on the field of Purity, while thousands fell on his right hand, and ten thousands on his left, the easy Prey of corruption." Further on he adds, "Let us thank Heaven who lent us the great good man so long, and neither wonder nor murmur at his being taken from us so soon, especially when we consider how little Influence his Example had upon Earth." There is something in a character like his which renders it worthy of the admiration and the love of generations, nay, of centuries, far beyond his own.

We must now return to the year 1730, and, leaving politics and local matters, must follow William Borlase to Bath, whither he went to seek the benefit of the waters under the care of a friend and relation, William Oliver. Until the commencement of the eighteenth century, when the value of her mineral waters was recognized once more, the ancient city of Bath had scarcely overstepped the limits prescribed for her by the Roman furrow. But, once brought into notice, her fame quickly spread. She had become, writes Oliver, "the universal hospital not only of this but of other nations, and hither the physicians sent their patients when they knew no longer what to do with them at home." A club-house was founded; street was added to street, and square to square. The Prince of Orange came, and departed with a new lease of life. Orange Grove, then the chief place of fashionable amusement, was called after his name, and a column erected in the midst, from a design furnished by the accomplished pencil of the rector of Ludgvan. In the year 1734, Bath was fast rising to the zenith of her glory. Without the city, Ralph Allen, the "Allworthy" of Fielding

(also a Cornishman, and one who had made his money by farming the cross-posts), was completing Prior Park, that splendid mansion the plan of which he had laid down in his mind twenty years before, and in which he was to gather round him all his kindred spirits, the *literati* of the age. Within the walls, Beau Nash superintended "the elegant amusements upon a system combining," as the guide-books tell us, "the most liberal urbanity with the most refined decorum." Balls and ridottos were the order of the day, patronized chiefly by the gentry of the western counties, who, unless called to town to represent one of their legion of boroughs, usually spent their seasons here. Indeed, the most trifling indisposition was a sufficient excuse to try the Bath waters; and fashionable valetudinarianism, side by side too often with real disease, gave employment to a regiment of doctors, the physic-princes of the place. With such a field before him, and a west-countryman himself, it was very natural that Oliver should determine to try his fortune at Bath; and his ambition was more than satisfied when, only four years after his arrival, on the death of the principal physician, he stepped into one of the most considerable practices of the place. He had already numbered among his patients many of his countrymen from Cornwall, but he now added to these the names of almost every person of rank or fashion who had been induced to visit the springs. The *habitué* of Prior Park, he was there introduced, in the year 1739, to Pope, and afterwards to Warburton. Speaking of Pope in a letter to Borlase, he says, "That delightful little man is the freest, the humblest, most entertaining creature, you ever met with. He has sojourned here two months with our great countryman, Mr. Allen, at his country-house, who needed only this lasting testimony of so honourable and distinguished a friendship to deliver his name in the most amiable light to posterity. They are extremely happy in each other: the one feeling great joy in the good heart and strong sense of his truly generous host; while the other, with the most pleasing attention, drinks in rivers of knowledge continually flowing from the lips of his delightful stranger."

Pope was at this time collecting materials for his grotto at Twickenham, and Oliver accordingly applied to Borlase to assist in the work by sending a hamper of the varied and beautiful minerals of their native county. A correspondence was thus opened between the far-famed

villa on the Thames, and the obscure rectory three hundred miles away. Two of these letters, unpublished we believe, and in the poet's own hand-writing, are in the collection before us. The first runs as follows :—

Twickenham, March 9, 1740.

SIR,

I thought to take this occasion of thanking you for so obliging a Testimony as you are giving me of your inclination to assist me, and surely the warm and particular manner in which you do me this favour deserved a more ready acknowledgment. I am as much indebted to your Letters to Dr. Oliver as to me upon this subject, but I was willing at ye same time that I thanked you to give you an account of the receipt of ye Box, and of ye choice I made of ye materials. But I find this morning (the first day that I arrived here) that your Bounty, like that of Nature, confounds all choice. But as I would imitate rather her Variety than make Ostentation of what we call her Riches, I shall be satisfy'd if you made your next Cargo consist more of such Ores and Sparrs as are beautiful, and not too difficult to be come at, than of the Scarce and valuable kinds. Indeed, 2 or 300 of Cubes of mundick which you mention might find a place luminous enough in one part of my Grotto, and are much the finest Ornaments it can receive. It will want nothing to complete it but your Instruction as to the Position, and the direction of the Sparrs and Ors in ye mines; for I would be glad to make the place resemble Nature in all her workings, and entertain a sensible as well as dazzle a Gazing Spectator. The Stalactites are appropriated to ye roof, and the Marbles (I think) of various colours to the pavement. I extremely wish one day to have the pleasure of seeing you, Sir, in the Place which you are contributing to make so agreeable; and I hope you will take the surest way to prevent your Favours from being lost upon me, which is what we desire of Providence, that He who bestows them will direct us how to make a right use of them.

As to your kind desire that I should acquaint you what quantity I want, I have indeed but few, not above a hamper or two. From others I expect more, but none so good as these of yours.

I am Sir,

Your most obliged, and faithful humble servant,
A. POPE.

The next extract is from a letter dated May, 1740, from the poet to Dr. Oliver:—

In taking his [*i.e.*, Borlase's] advice I don't make him the poorer, but I fear that in taking more of his collection I may, and therefore shall hardly have the conscience to trouble him for another cargo, how much so-ever I am unprovided. If he will engage his word

not to send me any that he intended to keep, I would ask him for some of the Metallic kind that are most common; so they do but shine and glitter it is enough, and the Vulgar Spectator will of course think them noble. Few Philosophers come here, but if ever Future Fate or Providence bring Dr. Oliver, Mr. Borlase, and Mr. Allen hither, I shall not envy the Queen's Hermitage either its Natural or Moral Philosophers.

In obtaining these minerals for Pope and others Borlase was sometimes led into making perilous descents into the Cornish mines. On one occasion, having received from a miner in St. Just some curious crystals of tin, and being anxious to visit the spot whence they were derived, he determined to make the attempt, and subsequently wrote an account of it to Oliver:—

Scrambling [he says] down the face of a precipice as well as I could, not many fathoms down, we were obliged to turn short to the right, and, by means of a single thorn twig, to winde ourselves into a little cave. The cave or hole was in the side of a vast hiatus, and far below the waters had made a large pool which concealed the real depth, and left room for the Imagination to suppose it still more deep and dangerous than it really was. Here we wanted nothing but a wood above us to have Virgil's fine drawing of his cave (at least in miniature) before our eyes:—

*Hinc atque hinc vastæ Rupes, geminique minantur
In cælum Scopuli, quorum sub vertice latè
Æquora tuta silent.*

By the help of our guide we got safe into our cave, and advancing a few paces were obliged to stay till some rubbish was removed in order to make our further passage the more commodious. Whilst this was doing, my business was to examine the strata on each side, the vault above, and the fragments under foot, amongst which I perceived many scattered remains of Cornish diamonds, which made us the more eager to proceed. At last the passage was cleared, so that on our hands and knees two of us crept after our guide into a hole, not much larger than an ordinary oven, and much of that figure. We had two candles with us, by means of which we saw the roof, which might in the middle be about five feet from the floor, in other parts not near so much. It consisted entirely of spar shot into Cornish diamonds. I could not discern any in a perpendicular position, but in every other direction they pointed forth very plentifully, sometimes in groups and clusters, sometimes single, now crossing each other, and now standing by each other with parallel sides. Some were smooth and shining and clear; others rough and opaque; some veined with red, like porphyry; others speckled thick with the smallest spots of black and purple, and a blueish cast; but the finest of all were those which had innumerable little diamonds

of the clearest water stuck upon their sides, and which by the candle had a lustre scarce to be conceived. Having gazed till we could no longer hold up our heads or open our eyes, not being able to turn about, we were forced to crawl out on all fours, with our feet foremost, from this beautiful but inconvenient place.

In spite, however, of the inaccessible places whence they came, Pope received a second cargo of minerals a month after the first. His letter, acknowledging these, since it contains in many points a more detailed description of the grotto than will be found elsewhere, may be read with interest. It is dated from Twickenham, June the 8th, 1740:—

SIR,—As soon as I received your very obliging present and letter, I writ to Dr. Oliver, designing him to prepare the way for my thanks, by assuring you I wanted words to express them, and by taking to himself a part of an obligation which is really above any Merit I can claim to it. I fear, by a Paper I found in the Box, that you have robb'd your own Collection to enrich me, and the same paper gave me an excellent Motto for my Grot, in some part of which I must fix your name, if I can contrive it, agreeably to your Modesty and Merit, in a Shade but shining. I deferr'd writing to you 'till I should form a guess how far your materials wd go in ye work, which is now half finished, ye ruder parts entirely so; in its present condition it is quite natural, and can only admit of more beauties by the Glitter of more minerals, not the disposition or manner of placing them, with which I am quite satisfy'd. I have managed ye Roof so as to admit of the larger as well as smaller pendulous [crystals]; the sides are strata of various, beautiful, but rude Marbles, between which run ye Loads of Metal, East and West, and in ye pavement also, the direction of ye Grotto happening to lie so. And I have opened ye whole into one Room, groin'd above from pillar to pillar (not of a regular Architecture, but like supporters left in a Quarry), by which means there is a fuller Light cast into all but ye narrow passage (which is cover'd with living and long Mosses), only behind ye 2 largest Pillars there is a deep recess of dark stone, where two Glasses artfully fix'd reflect ye Thames, and almost deceive ye Eye to that degree as to seem two arches opening to the River on each side, as there is one real in ye middle. The little well is very light, ornamented with Stalactites above, and Spars and Cornish Diamonds on ye Edges, with a perpetual drip of water into it from pipes above among the Icicles. I have cry'd help to some other friends, as I found my Want of materials, and have stellified some of ye Roof with Bristol stone of a fine lustre. I am in hopes of some of ye Red transparent Spar from the Lead mines, which would vastly vary the colouring. If you will

be extravagant, indeed, in sending anything more, I wish it were glittering tho' not curious; as equally proper in such an Imitation of Nature, who is not so Profuse as you, tho' ever most kind to those who cultivate her. As I procure more Ores or Spars, I go on enriching ye Crannies and Interstices, which, as my Marbles are in large pieces, cramp'd fast with iron to ye walls are pretty spacious and unequal, admitting Loads and Veins of 2, 3, or 4 inches broad, and running up and down thro' Roof, Sides, and Pavement. The perpendicular Fissures I generally fill with Spar. I have run into such a detail, yt I had forgot to tell you this whole Grotto makes ye communication between my Garden and the Thames. I hope I shall live to see you there. . . . I have neither room nor words to tell you how much you oblige your Humble Servant,
A. POPE.

That the promise to place the donor's name "in the shade, but shining," was amply fulfilled, appears from the following extract from a letter of Dr. Oliver's, dated December 15th, 1741:—"I suppose Sir John has told you that he has read your name in letters of gold in the grotto, an honour the greatest man might be ambitious of; but if it had been in black letters, made only of the common ink the little gentleman uses when he embalms his friends, it would be more likely to give you immortality." As a slight acknowledgment of his gratitude, Pope forwarded to Borlase a copy of his own edition of his works, published in 1737. The appearance of a spurious edition in Dublin, which had been reprinted, led to the publication of this authentic one. The former, according to the extracts before us (though some curious lights have recently been thrown on this subject by Mr. Elwin), had given the poet great offence. We find him, for instance, complaining bitterly to his friend Sir John St. Aubyn "that he was under the hard necessity of betraying his most familiar correspondences by the villainy of some who had taken advantage of Dean Swift's infirmities to get the original letters out of his hands."

The following lines, written by Pope on his grotto, were printed after his death by his gardener in a small pamphlet on his garden, with the exception of those in italics, which were not published, but appear in "an amended version" in MS. sent by the poet to Dr. Oliver:—

Thou who shalt stop where Thames' translucent wave
Shines a broad Mirrour thro' the Shadowy Cave:

Where lingering drops from Min'ral Roofs
distil,
And pointed Crystals break the Sparkling
Kill;

Unpolished Gems no ray on Pride bestow,
And latent Metals innocently glow.

*Thou see'st that Island's Wealth, where only
free,*

*Earth to her Entrails feels not Tyranny,
Approach! great Nature studiously behold,
And eye the Mine, without a Wish for Gold;
But enter, awful, this Inspiring Grot,
Here, nobly pensive, St. John sate and thought,
Here British sighs from dying Wyndham stole;
And the bright Flame was shot through
Marchmont's soul;*

Let such, such only, tread this sacred Floor,
Who dare to love their Country and be poor.

A touching trait in the character of Pope was, as all know, his devotion to his parents. Thus the central object of his exquisite garden at Twickenham was an obelisk erected to the memory of his mother. In connection with this feeling it is interesting to find that when Dr. Oliver was about to place a monument to the memory of his parents in Sithney churchyard, the poet wrote their epitaph and drew the design of a pillar, which was subsequently placed there. Pope frequently repeated his visits to Prior Park, and on each occasion renewed his intimacy with Oliver, sometimes walking in to Bath early in the morning to breakfast with him. His constitution, however, always weakly, was now rapidly giving way, and a letter from Sir John St. Aubyn in May, 1744, prepared Borlase for the news of his death in the following month. "I doubt," he says, "your friend Mr. Pope can't last long. He sent to desire Lord Oxford and myself to dine with him to-day, and I thought he would have dy'd then; he has a dropsie which has almost drowned him." That his friendship for Oliver continued to the last, appears from the following letter, received at Ludgvan from the doctor immediately after the news of his death had arrived:—

I believe my dear Friend would be surprised if I should begin my Letter to him with any other Subject than that of condolence for the Loss of one, who contributed more to the pleasure and profit of mankind than any Poet has done these many ages—*delectando pariterque monendo*. This time twelvemonths I spent some time with him almost alone; I then endeavoured to know as much of him as I could, that I might fix the Idea of him in my mind that was to remain, for I parted with him with very little hopes of ever seeing him again. I suppose you have seen the Copy of his Will in the publick Papers, from which you may guess that all his works will be published in 4to. by Mr. Warb., who by commenting upon

them, gains the property of the copy of those which are not already disposed of. Mr. Warburton tells me there are only two or three small pieces of Mr. Pope's remaining that will ever see the light. We must receive them, and be thankful for what we have already had. I hear Sir William Stanhope declares strongly for the Grotto, but I would willingly have it fall into more philosophical hands. Whoever has it may be puzzled at the great Shining Letters which glow with gratitude in the Name—*Borlase*. On this part of his works only I think myself capable of writing a comment, which I will send to whoever possesses it, tho' I am not like to get the Grotto for my pains. If Sir John is now with you at the Mount, he can inform you of more circumstances relating to Mr. Pope than I can, and I should be glad of your Anecdotes which you receive from him. I believe he might have lingered some Months longer if he had not fallen into the hands of a curing Doctor. Celsus says, "*In quibusdam morbis qui curantur citius moriuntur.*"

Just as he was expiring came forth the following couplet from some stander-by:—

Dunces rejoice! forgive all Insults past,
The Greatest Dunce has kill'd your greatest
Foe at last.

Sir John St. Aubyn, as we have seen, survived the poet only a few weeks, and never reached Ludgvan to tell his friend his anecdotes of Pope. Commenting on the two sad events, and evidently having in mind the "Interviews in the Realms of Death," Borlase, in a letter to Oliver, writes, "Will not the best of poets, and the honestest senator and worthiest father, friend, and husband, renew their acquaintance, think you, and congratulate each other on leaving a country so devoted?" William Oliver survived his friend the poet for twenty years, and during all that time continued his correspondence with Ludgvan, for "old friends," he says, "are like old coins, which increase in their value in proportion to their age and scarcity." In 1746 he purchased as a vacation residence a small farmhouse two miles from Box, "situated at the head of the vale, thro' which the river and the London Road run together towards Bath." It commanded, he tells us, a lovely view. "The city crosses the vale about three miles from me, and creeps up Lansdown; and about the same distance beyond it rises Mr. Langton's Park, a knowle of which, well wooded, terminates my view." To this snug retreat, "to show his love for Cornwall and the sense of his childhood," he gave the name of his birth-place, and called it Trevarnoe.

I would by no means forget [he tells his

friend in his account of the place] the years I spent with my father and mother. I have great pleasure in recollecting a thousand little circumstances of their tenderness and my own frailties. 'Tis not only with our own species that we contract the most lasting friendships in the beginning of life. I remember the name and character of every dog I used to miss school to hunt with; I could go to every little thicket which was most likely to afford game; I love the memory of a tall sycamore, out of which I used to cut whistles; I have the situation of the hazel which afforded the best cob-nuts full in my eye; and I remember with gratitude a rare [apple] tree, which afforded the first regale in summer, and the Borlase's Pippin, which, like its namesakes, was a high entertainment in a winter's evening, in a warm room, and with a good fire.

From this letter we may perhaps form as true an estimate of Dr. Oliver's character and the reason of his great popularity, as could be afforded by transcribing here a copy of verses descriptive of him from the pen of an amateur contemporary Cornish poetess, Miss Gregor, of Trewarthenick, which are, nevertheless, not without merit.

While at his new Trevarnoe, Oliver was frequently visited by Warburton, who had married the niece and heiress of Mr. Allen, of Prior Park, and hither also, amongst others, came a poor painter, called Vandrest. In former years this man had been intimate with Borlase. His profession, however, had, as is usual with all portrait-painters but the best, turned out little better than starvation, and he now lived on the generosity of his friends. The following is part of a letter from his old acquaintance at Ludgvan, encouraging the poor fellow to change the subject of his paintings for one which might be more profitable.

If you will take my advice [it begins], you must get into quite another way. Change the serious *primæ* traits of a face form'd by commanding constables and beades, and flattered by the feasts of a Corporation, for the grim terrors and majesty of a General in action. Instead of Cupids and the soft and tender ladies, draw the fierce horse, the square battalion, the pale wounded hero, the glittering swords, the level'd muskets, the streaming banners: in short, Van, I would have you quite lay aside the dull insipid face-painting; and, as I know you can easily master the difficulty of passing from one part of your profession to another (if you would be rul'd by me), go into battle; conform to the times; teach your mind to draw skirmishes, sieges, tents, and batteries; and, as Vander Meulen did, mix the delicate groves and country with all the parade of war. But—methinks I hear

some arch-wagg say—"It is scarce worth while; we may have war without battles, as well as have so many armaments without war." If so, paint the sleeping Genius of Britain, whom no insults can rouse and no wrongs provoke, and I can assure you that no pictures will sell better.*

With two extracts from the letters of Dr. Oliver, bearing on very different subjects, we shall close that portion of the correspondence before us which led us to Bath, and to the literary circle that was gathered there. The first is dated November, 1746. It was written on his return from London, and speaks incidentally of the trial of the lords in Westminster Hall, at which he was present:—

I should long since [he writes] have given you a Description of the most august Assembly this, or perhaps any Nation can shew, which was called together for the Trial of the late unfortunate Lords. But even the Majesty of that awful tribunal was broke in upon by a thousand giggling women, whose Hearts felt Emotions very different from Compassion. Many of the Senators, clad in reverential Scarlet and Ermine, were debased by Toupees and Bags into Fops and Jockeys, and plainly discovered that their Heads at least had not the outward appearance of Judges. Is it not strange that a company of Grenadiers should be obliged to wear a uniform Dress, such as becomes the fierceness of their Profession, and yet that a House of Lords should have the liberty to disguise themselves in a manner quite unbecoming the Dignity of their high office? From all this pageantry we could easily have step'd into the neighbouring Repository of the Remains of the Ancestors from whom these noble Judges derive the pompous Titles they debate. I viewed the breathing Marble and curious Sculpture with grave delight; but upon reading the Inscriptions could not but think it an impious Absurdity that a House dedicated to the God of Truth should be made the Archives of lying Tables.

The second letter from which we shall take an extract was written from Bath in July, 1760. After mentioning "Poor Nash, the ghost of whose greatness still stalks amongst us," and to whom "Mr. Allen is very generous," Oliver proceeds to describe the effect produced in Bath by the appearance of Sterne's book:—

Pray [he says], are the works of the Revd. Mr. Tristram Shandy yet arrived in Cornwall? This gentleman is perhaps one of the most extraordinary Authors that have appeared upon the literary stage in our day. He is admired, beloved, not understood, and adored by all kinds of People, from the right Reverends down to Fanny Murray, Kitty Fisher, Lady

* This was written October 8th, 1739.

Cov., and Mr. Whitfield. Long had he sigh'd, and mourned in private the licentiousness of the Age, and its aversion to everything that is Serious and religious. The debauching Novels, and the luscious Histories of Lady's Adventures written by themselves were the only books, he found, that could meet with the approbation and encouragement of the great, and attract the attention of the *οἱ πολλοί* sufficiently to get themselves read, and to keep their Authors and venders from starving. As he was musing in his Study, and leaning his Elbow on his Desk, and his Satyr's cheek upon his Hand, revolving in his mind the hard fate of a poor Sermon about Conscience, which he had published the year before, of which his Bookseller could not get off a dozen, it struck into his pious mind that since all the ancient methods of propagating Religion and Morality were grown obsolete, out of date, and of none effect, some new method ought to be invented by the Pastors of the Church, by which the Novellists and Memoir-readers might be trapped into the reading of pious Discourses even without their knowledge or consent. If we have been foiled in the field, he said, let us try the ambush. The Doctor does not scruple to cheat Children and Fools into the taking of a bitter Pill, which will do them good, by hiding it in Jelly of Currants, tho' he knows the Vehicle will be a regale to the worms. Tristram's fertile Brain soon hit on a new method of making his Sermon to be read, which succeeded beyond his most sanguine hopes. He immediately sat down to write the Life and Opinions of himself. . . . The whole Town were taken in by this Bit of History which hung delicious on their palates as it was highly Season'd, Pepper'd, and Salted with the most poignant wit, and decorated with the most lively Imagination. They read on with the utmost rapidity. But, as they were in the midst of their career, they ran full butt against the poor Sermon, which had been so long despised by the world, and were as much frightened as a poor Pilot is, who strikes upon a hidden Rock while his Vessel is under full sail. What should they do? They tried to pass it by on every side; but pious Tristram had laid it across their way with so much art, and tacked both Ends of it so fast to the precedent and subsequent parts of the history, that a man might as easily get from one side of Bristol Quay to the other without passing the Draw-bridge, as to get through the whole Art and Mystery of Dr. Slop . . . without reading the Sermon, which they all did, no question to the great refreshment of their Consciences. O Tristram, how great is thy Ingenuity! It can surely be equalled by nothing but thy burning zeal for the Propagation of Religion. How many poor souls would have gone into another world without ever having read a Sermon in this, had it not been for this thy pious Fraud! Reverends and right Reverends shall give their Testimonials of their approbation of thy Contrivance! And, lo! they have already done it. Alas! poor Yorick, thou art

dropt, and the *tunstern* Face of the real Author, prefix to his Volume of Sermons, vindicates his Works, and the Universal applause they have acquired him. Two Volumes of Sermons are now published by the Revd. Mr. Sterne, Prebendary of York, Biographer of Tristram Shandy, and Successor to the revd. Mr. Yorick and his Horse. They are very pretty little quaint moral Essays, wrote with a great Spirit of Philanthropy; ushered into the world by Dukes and Duchesses, Bishops, Priests and Deacons, grave Matrons, pretty Masters, and innocent Misses, who will no doubt all read them, and recommend them to their Friends. Is not this a noble Conquest over the vicious Novellists? But perhaps you have neither seen Mr. Shandy or Mr. Yorrick, and then all the Stuff I have been prating is meer unintelligible Jargon.

The collection of letters, from which we have hitherto been making extracts, has led us far away from the quiet Cornish rectory, and what was passing there; and has left us little space to speak but in the most cursory manner of those pursuits which formed the life-work of William Borlase. His biography has indeed been so frequently sketched and his published works so often criticised, that it only remains for us to gather up from his MSS. such stray fragments as have never yet seen the light. The promise made in early life to "amend those days of carelessness" was indeed amply fulfilled. His life as a literary man may be divided into three periods. The earlier portion was occupied by the study of archæology; the time of middle age and the vigour of his mind was engrossed by that of natural history; while his later years were devoted to making collections for a parochial account of Cornwall, containing the heraldry and genealogy of the district, and which he never lived to publish.

The study of antiquities, although rapidly reviving, had, at the commencement of the eighteenth century, fallen into very indifferent hands.

I remember [says Borlase, writing to Huddesford] when the name of an antiquary was, through some particulars in the professors, at a very low ebb. The eldest, in my recollection, was Tom Hearne, at Oxford, well skilled, indeed, in History, and a laborious and exact editor, but perhaps the oddest figure of a man, and one least cut out for society, or to make any study amiable that was ever met with. He was remarkable among us boys (such fools have disgraced Oxford) for his lank hair and uncouth address. My friend, Mr. Wise, had his share of learning, but he was the joke of the wits. Dr. Brown Willis had doubtless his merit, and as a compiler has much benefited English Ecclesiastical History; but you

will allow he was not cut out to cast much lustre upon science. In his beloved forte, Antiquity, he was indefatigable, and intent upon and charmed with everything that was old. I remember he told me at Oxford how old his chariot was; I have really forgot the date, but it was an age before any post-chaise had being: his horses were a little more modern, and so was his garb, but not much. Dr. Rawlinson equalled all that went before him in oddity, as much as he fell short of them in learning. These were the antiquaries of my younger daies, all industrious, but unhappily inimical to elegance, not to say decency, and wanting that liberal turn and general knowledge of arts and mankind which this study has since experienced the benefit of.

Neither were the ideas of these old antiquaries at all in advance of their manners. Dr. Stukeley, for instance, writes to Borlase: "I am persuaded our Druids were of the patriarchal religion, and came from Abraham. I believe Abraham's grandson, Asser, helped to plant our island, and gave name to it." Such being the condition of the science, it must have required a bold man to venture on the track. In 1754 appeared the first edition of the "Antiquities of Cornwall," a work universally approved and applauded both at home and abroad. The Druids have, indeed, of late years been somewhat rudely dismissed from the shade of their accustomed oaks, and the rock basins have been proved to be simply the result of the weathering of the granite; but, these things excepted, the work is one which still holds its own as an authority among students of archæology at the present day. The study of natural history at Ludgvan soon followed that of antiquities, almost as a natural consequence. To a mind like that of Borlase, the inquiry into the origin of the works of man soon passed, as from child's play to earnest, to the attentive consideration of those of man's Creator. Archæology to him had been but the first attempt to find a footing in the past, and, apart from the value of its own results, it gave birth to that spirit of curiosity which is the handmaid and forerunner of a more profound science. And this craving after science soon became science itself.

At the time of which we speak, the end of the first chapter in the modern history of inductive science was being worked out. But still the age was simply one of collecting, without a sufficient rudimentary knowledge in the collectors themselves to make any adequate generalization possible. It would take far more space than is at present at our disposal to give any idea of the gropings in the dark, some-

times on the right track, generally on the wrong, which this collection of letters reveals. Progress, however, was undoubtedly being made. Let one of the correspondents, Emanuel Mendez Da Costa, speak for himself: "Learning," he says (writing in 1761,) "is greatly pursued at present, and we may hope that rewards will attend the meritorious. The discoveries daily made are of the utmost importance to human kind; the variations of the magnetic needle, and the deductions which will result from the observations on the late transit of Venus . . . will be invaluable benefits to posterity; and who knows," he adds almost prophetically, "what may hereafter be discovered from Electricity? for I am convinced that extraordinary effect in nature, one time or other, will be found to be of the greatest benefit to mankind."

As to geology, that science, in the form in which we learn it now, was not in existence. Even Werner's theory of the superposition of mineral groups had not yet appeared; but still signs of a coming change in the modes of thought on that subject, too, were to be found in papers read at the Royal Society on the causes of earthquakes, tidal waves, etc. Several phenomena of this nature, noticed in Mount's Bay, and one in especial which occurred simultaneously with the earthquake at Lisbon, set Borlase thinking; and accordingly, in due time, a MS. volume was circulated amongst his friends, entitled "Private Thoughts on the Creation and the Deluge." His view on submarine upheaval is curiously allied to that which has been so generally accepted of late years on that subject, and his theory on the causes of earthquakes might sometimes be almost placed in parallel columns with that found in Sir Charles Lyell's "Principles," so strikingly similar are the two. In spite of the fact that some of his friends detected in it passages at variance with the Mosaic account, this treatise was not only prepared for the press, but two specimen pages were printed in octavo by Nichols, when the work was finally arrested by the last illness of its author. In this state it has come down to us, a volume full of interest, if not to the student, at all events to the historian of inductive science; since, while on the one hand it loyally adheres to the *historic* truth of the Mosaic account, it denies *in toto* its *scientific* pretensions. It enters at the same time a curious but forcible protest (giving a *résumé* of their theories) against the vagaries of Woodward and Burnet, Whis-

ton and Hutchinson. Altogether it is the product of a bold and thoughtful as well as of a religious mind, and, had it been published, would have marked, if we mistake not, one not unimportant step in the progress of induction as it strove to free itself from the physico-theological mizmaze which reined the intellect and clouded the perception of those who were following immediately in the wake of Newton.

The Cornish minerals, which had before been the medium of Borlase's correspondence with Pope, formed also his introduction to the world of science. The Germans were at this time the sole masters of the metallic art. They derived a much-boasted knowledge—more the result of imagination and of a survival from the alchemists, than of real induction—from the effects of fire upon the different mineral bodies. The origin of crystals was one of their chief objects of research. But Romé de Lisle had not yet written his treatise, and the Leyden professors, Boerhaave, Gronovius, and even Linnæus himself, were still but gropers in the dark. The latter (Linnæus) was, as is well known, by no means happy in the mineralogical portion of his great work, as we could abundantly prove from original extracts now before us. Indeed, he owns himself elsewhere, that "lithology is not what he plumes himself upon." These were the men with whom Borlase corresponded. Each of them enriched his collection from the mines of Cornwall, and all communicated in return the results of their experiments, to be inserted in the year 1758 into the "Natural History" of that country. On the subject of tin Linnæus remarks that it is "*nulibi præstantius quam in Cornwallia*." Amongst the numerous visitors who at different times paid a visit to Ludgvan, we may mention Thomas Pennant, whose love for natural history, according to his own account, commenced in the study there among the strings of birds' eggs and endless curiosities which adorned the walls and shelves. Ellis, too, the author of the "Corallines," and the elaborator in England of the French theory of their animal origin, picked up some of his best specimens on the Geer rock south of Penzance in the company of his Cornish friend. The letters of these two eminent naturalists form no small portion of the later correspondence. In order to show how a love of science for its own sake was gaining ground in the middle of the last century, we may insert one extract from the pen of James Theobald, of Waltham Place, Berks: "I had the honour," he says "of

being a member of the Royal Society during the time when Sir Isaac Newton filled the president's chair; and then, if the meeting consisted of ten or a dozen, it was thought a handsome appearance, but at present it is reckoned a very thin one if there are not upwards of fifty."

Of the heraldic and parochial collections of Dr. Borlase this is not the place to speak. The third volume, in which they were to have appeared, he never lived to complete. Suffice it to say that they are teeming with matters of interest, many still unpublished, relating to all parts of the country. We hear, for example, of the ghost of Boconnock; of the oak-tree whose leaves turned white on the day when King Charles I. was murdered; of the great and noble family of Carminow, who could trace their descent direct from King Arthur himself; of one of this family in later times who, being forced by circumstances to leave his house, wrote up over the door, "Sin and iniquity have rooted out antiquity;" and of the last of the line, who was dragged over the cliff by greyhounds and dashed to pieces below. We hear, too, told in quaint language, the story of St. Agnes and the Giant Bolster; of a certain Sir Richard Vyvyan, who being master of the mint, under Charles I., carried the royal stamp to his seat at Trelowarren, and there coined money for the western Cavaliers; and (which is perhaps more interesting than all) we hear in this collection of a *Cornish Bible*, translated (as it seems from the context) into *that language* by John de Trevisa, fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, at the close of the fourteenth and commencement of the fifteenth century. Here is a subject for inquiry indeed; apart from its bibliographical value, this volume, if it exists, would restore to the philologist the entire Cornish tongue.

In 1769 Borlase lost his wife, "one," he says, "who took more than her part of domestic cares on purpose to indulge his tendency to his favourite pursuits." From this date the care of his parish occupied most of his time. He had, indeed, never permitted his literary pursuits to render him callous to the duties of his profession. In 1732 he had, in addition to Ludgvan, been presented to the living of St. Just, a bleak mining country on the moors of the Land's End district. Comparing these two places (both of which he knew well), Oliver had written to him, "Ludgvan is like a buxom girl of eighteen, always laughing and playing, and affording plentifully all the superficial pleasures of mirth

and jollity; but St. Just is an old haggard philosopher, whose rueful appearance would deter the soft and luxurious from having anything to do with him; but he is full of riches within." His new acquisition he found in anything but a satisfactory condition. His parishioners there were "much given to drinking, especially on the sabbath day, a great part of which they spent at the alehouses of the church town." "They also," he adds, "began to absent themselves from their church on holidays;" in consequence of which, and other irregularities, he proceeded thither, and read the sentence of excommunication over a certain Mr. Pokenhorne. But, in spite of these unruly spirits, the average congregation "in the forenoon on Sundays was 1,000, and in the afternoon 500," a fact which, taken with the others, is strangely out of accordance with the generally received opinion, that the establishment in west Cornwall a century ago was at a very low ebb. Over the spiritual welfare of his own immediate flock at Ludgvan, Dr. Borlase* kept a still more watchful eye. The belief in the power of evil spirits, working through the medium of "white witches" or wizards, was at that time as constant in the west, as it was universal among all classes. The following is a curious letter on this subject, addressed to a certain Mr. Bettesworth at St. Ives:—

Sir, — I hope the rumours of your pretending to conjuration are not true; and I have so much charity as to believe that you have not been meddling in the dangerous mysteries of a lower world; but rather, like a true Christian, defy and refuse all intercourse with the devil; but since there are such rumours, and you are said to take upon you to discover lost or stolen goods, I hope you will think that, to retrieve and vindicate your character, it will be necessary for you to use abundant caution that you give no encouragement to silly women to come to you on such foolish and wicked errands; and particularly I am obliged to desire that no such encouragement may be given to those persons who are the flock, and must be the care of your most humble servant — WILLIAM BORLASE.

It is curious to note that the affairs of the Church of England were affording her ministers at this time quite as much perplexity as they seem to do nowadays; and that the special subject of anxiety exactly one hundred years ago was precisely the same as at present. Might not the following extract from a letter dated 1772,

have appeared in a certain Church newspaper in 1872? "The rage against the Church," says Borlase, "is I fear, increasing; and I shall not wonder to see a bill next year brought in to cut off the *Athanasian Creed*; and the year after to strip the Liturgy of the Trinity; and the third to sweep away the whole service," a sentence from which it would appear that the Athanasian Creed was in those days at least considered by most moderate churchmen as the touch-stone and the key-note of the Christian faith, and that to remove it from the prayer-book would be paramount to striking a death-blow to the Church itself.

The next extract, which will be our last, relates to the extravagance of the lower classes in Cornwall in 1771. Like the last, it affords some interesting points for comparison with the present day:—

We hear [it begins] every day of murmurs of the common people; of want of employ; of short wages; of dear provisions: there may be some reason for this; our taxes are heavy upon the *necessaries* of life; but the chief cause is the extravagance of the vulgar in the *unnecessaries* of life. In one tin-work near me, where most of the tinnors of my parish have been employed for years, there were lately computed to have been at one time three score *snuff-boxes* [the italics are ours]; there may be in my parish about 50 girls above 15 years old, and I dare say 49 of them have *scarlet-cloaks*; there is scarce a family in the parish, I mean of common labourers, but have *tea*, once if not twice a day, and in the parish alms-house there are several families, but not one without their *tea-kettle*, and brandy when they can purchase it. Your journey-men at London, and elsewhere, have their clubbs, and newspapers, and sometimes worse amusements, if worse can be than some of *them*: in short, all labourers live above their condition.

As old age crept on, Borlase devoted himself to painting, and to sewing together and binding those letters from which we have gathered these few extracts. His habits of industry never deserted him to the last. Every morning he rose at five, and every evening retired to rest at nine, continuing these regular healthy hours until a few days before his death, which occurred at Ludgvan on the 31st of August, 1772. The leading feature of his character was contentment, as far removed from stoic indifference on the one hand, as it was from listless indolence on the other,—a temperament, indeed, which carried him pleasantly through all the duties of life, and calmly through its cares. From an age like our own, when intellectual life has so often to

* He had been presented with the honorary D.C.L. at Oxford in 1766.

be maintained amidst the jostling elements of progress which knows no rest, it is pleasant to look back to that quiet spot by the Cornish sea, where, far removed as he was from the busy hum of men, the subject of our memoir was still happily engaged in working out for himself, line by line and page by page, that mighty book of nature in which his philosophy taught him to recognize the First Cause, and his religion the Creator of the whole.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

THE CURATE IN CHARGE.

CHAPTER V.

THE GIRLS AT SCHOOL.

THE school to which Miss Maydew sent the girls was in the outskirts of a seaside town, and it was neither the best nor the worst of such establishments. There were some things which all the girls had to submit to, and some which bore especially on the Miss St. Johns, who had been received at a lower price than most of the others; but on the whole the Miss Blandys were good women, and not unkind to the pupils. Cicely and Mab, as sisters, had a room allotted to them in the upper part of the house by themselves, which was a great privilege—a bare attic room, with, on one side, a sloping roof, no carpet, except a small piece before each small bed, and the most meagre furniture possible. But what did they care for that? They had two chairs on which to sit and chatter facing each other, and a little table for their books and their work. They had a peep at the sea from their window, and they had their youth—what could any one desire more? In the winter nights when it was cold sitting up in their fireless room, they used to lie down in those two little beds side by side and talk, often in the dark, for the lights had to be extinguished at ten o'clock. They had not spoken even to each other of their father's marriage. This unexpected event had shocked and bewildered them in the fantastic delicacy of their age. They could not bear to think of their father as so far descended from his ideal elevation, and shed secret tears of rage more than of sorrow when they thought of their mother thus superseded. But the event was too terrible for words, and nothing whatever was said of it between them. When the next great occurrence, the birth of the two babies, was intimated to

them, their feelings were different. They were first indignant, almost annoyed; then amused; in which stage Mab made such a sketch of Miss Brown with a baby in each arm, and Mr. St. John pathetically looking on, that they both burst forth into laughter, and the bond of reserve on this event was broken; and then all at once an interest of which they were half ashamed arose in their minds. They fell silent both together in a wondering reverie, and then Mab said to Cicely, turning to her big eyes of surprise, —

"They belong to us too, I suppose. What are they to us?"

"Of course our half-brothers," said Cicely; and then there was another pause, partly of awe at the thought of a relationship so mysterious, and partly because it was within five minutes of ten. Then the candle was put out, and they jumped into their beds. On the whole, perhaps it was more agreeable to talk of their father's other children in the dark, when the half-shame, half-wonder of it would not appear in each face.

"Is one expected to be fond of one's half-brother?" said Mab doubtfully.

"There is one illusion gone," said Cicely, in all the seriousness of sixteen. "I have always been cherishing the idea that when we were quite grown up, instead of going out for governesses or anything of that sort, we might keep together, Mab, and take care of papa."

"But then," said Mab, "what would you have done with Mrs. St. John? I don't see that the babies make much difference. *She* is there to take care of papa."

On this Cicely gave an indignant sigh, but having no answer ready held her peace.

"For my part, I never thought of that," said Mab. "I have always thought it such a pity I am not a boy, for then I should have been the brother and you the sister, and I could have painted and you could have kept my house. I'll tell you what I should like," she continued, raising herself on her elbow with the excitement of the thought; "I should like if we two could go out into the world like Rosalind and Celia."

Were it not better,
Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man?"

"But you are not more than common tall," said Cicely, with unsympathetic laughter; "you are a little, tiny, insignificant thing."

Mab dropped upon her pillow, half crying. "You have no feeling," she said. "Aunt Jane says I shall go on growing for two years yet. Mamma did —"

"If you please," said Cicely, "you are not the one that is like mamma."

This little passage of arms stopped the chatter. Cicely, penitent, would have renewed it after an interval, but Mab was affronted. Their father's marriage, however, made a great difference to the girls, even before the appearance of the "second family;" the fact that he had now another housekeeper and companion, and was independent of them, affected the imagination of his daughters, though they were scarcely conscious of it. They no longer thought of going home, even for the longer holidays; and settling down at home after their schooling was over had become all at once impossible. Not that this change led them immediately to make new plans for themselves; for the youthful imagination seldom goes so far unguided except when character is very much developed; and the two were only unsettled, uneasy, not quite knowing what was to become of them; or rather, it was Cicely who felt the unsettledness and uneasiness as to her own future. Mab had never had any doubt about hers since she was ten years old. She had never seen any pictures to speak of, so that I cannot say she was a heaven-born painter, for she scarcely understood what that was. But she meant to draw; her pencil was to be her profession, though she scarcely knew how it was to be wielded, and thus she was delivered from all her sister's vague feelings of uncertainty. Mab's powers, however, had not been appreciated at first at school, where Miss Maydew's large assertions as to her niece's cleverness had raised corresponding expectations. But when the drawing-master came with his little stock of landscapes to be copied, Mab, quite untutored in this kind, was utterly at a loss. She neither knew how to manage her colours nor how to follow the vague lines of the "copy," and I cannot describe the humiliation of the sisters, nor the half-disappointment, half-triumph of Miss Blandy.

"My dear, you must not be discouraged; I am sure you did as well as you could; and the fact is, we have a very high standard here," the schoolmistress said.

It happened, however, after two or three of these failures that Cicely, sent by Miss Millicent Blandy on a special message into that retired and solemn chamber

where Miss Blandy the elder sister sat in the mornings supervising and correcting everything, from the exercises to the characters of her pupils, found the head of the establishment with the drawing-master looking over the productions of the week. He had Mab's drawing in his hand, and he was shaking his head over it.

"I don't know what to say about the youngest Miss St. John. This figure is well put in, but her sky and her distance are terrible," he was saying. "I don't think I shall make anything of her."

When Cicely heard this she forgot that she was a girl at school. She threw down a pile of books she was carrying, and flew out of the room without a word, making a great noise with the door. What she ought to have done was to have made a curtsy, put down the books softly by Miss Blandy's elbow, curtsied again, and left the room noiselessly, in all respects save that of walking backward as she would have done at court. Need I describe the look of dismay that came into Miss Blandy's face?

"These girls will be my death," she said. "Were there ever such colts? — worse than boys." This was the most dreadful condemnation Miss Blandy ever uttered. "If their aunt does not insist upon drawing, as she has so little real talent, she had better give it up."

At this moment Cicely burst in again breathless, her hair streaming behind her, her dress catching in the door, which she slammed after her. "Look here!" she cried; "look here, before you say Mab has no talent!" and she tossed down on the table the square blue-lined book which her sister by this time had almost filled. She stood before them glowing and defiant, with flashing eyes and flowing hair; then she recollected some guilty recent pages, and quailed, putting out her hand for the book again. "Please it is only the beginning, not the end, you are to look at," she said, peremptory yet appealing. Had Miss Blandy alone been in the seat of judgment, she would, I fear, have paid but little attention to this appeal; but the old drawing-master was gentle and kind, as old professors of the art so often are (for art is humanity, I think, almost oftener than letters), and, besides, the young petitioner was very pretty in her generous enthusiasm, which affected him both as a man and an artist. The first page at once gave him a guess as to the inexpediency of examining the last; and the old man perceived in a moment at

once the mistake he had made, and the cause of it. He turned over the first few pages, chuckling amused approbation. "So these are your sister's," he said, and laughed and nodded his kind old head. When he came to a sketch of Hannah, the maid-of-all-work at the rectory, the humour of which might seem more permissible in Miss Blandy's eyes than the caricatures of ladies and gentlemen, he showed it to her; and even Miss Blandy, though meditating downright slaughter upon Cicely, could not restrain a smile. "Is this really Mabel's?" she condescended to ask. "As you say, Mr. Lake, not at all bad; much better than I could have thought."

"Better? it is capital!" said the drawing-master; and then he shut up the book close, and put it back in Cicely's hands. "I see there are private scribbblings in it," he said, with a significant look; "take it back, my dear, I will speak to Miss Mabel to-morrow. And now, Miss Blandy, we will finish our business, if you please," he said benevolently, to leave time for Cicely and her dangerous volume to escape. Miss Blandy was vanquished by this stratagem, and Cicely, beginning to tremble at the thought of the danger she had escaped, withdrew very demurely, having first piled up on the table the books she had thrown down in her impetuosity. I may add at once that she did not escape without an address, in which withering irony alternated with solemn appeal to her best feelings, and which drew many hot tears from poor Cicely's eyes, but otherwise, so far as I am aware, did her no harm.

Thus Mab's gifts found acknowledgment at Miss Blandy's. The old drawing-master shook his fine flexible old artist-hand at her. "You take us all off, young lady," he said; "you spare no one; but it is so clever that I forgive you; and by way of punishment you must work hard, now I know what you can do. And don't show that book of yours to anybody but me. Miss Blandy would not take it so well as I do."

"Oh, dear Mr. Lake, forgive me," said Mab, smitten with compunction; "I will never do it again!"

"Never till the next time," he said, shaking his head; "but, anyhow, keep it to yourself, for it is a dangerous gift."

And from that day he put her on "the figure" and "the round"—studies in which Mab at first showed little more proficiency than she had done in the humbler sphere of landscape; for having leapt all

at once into the exercise of something that felt like original art, this young lady did not care to go back to the elements. However, what with the force of school-discipline, and some glimmerings of good sense in her own juvenile bosom, she was kept to it, and soon found the ground steady under her feet once more and made rapid progress. By the time they had been three years at school, she was so proficient, that Mr. Lake, on retiring, after a hard-worked life, to well-earned leisure, recommended her as his successor. So that by seventeen, a year before Mrs. St. John's death, Mab had released Miss Maydew and her father from all responsibility on her account. Cicely was not so clever; but she, too, had begun to help Miss Blandy in preference to returning to the rectory and being separated from her sister. Vague teaching of "English" and music is not so profitable as an unmistakable and distinct art like drawing; but it was better than setting out upon a strange world alone, or going back to be a useless inmate of the rectory. As teachers the girls were both worse off and better off than as pupils. They were worse off because it is a descent in the social scale to come down from the level of those who pay to be taught, to the level of those who are paid for teaching—curious though the paradox seems to be; and they were better off, in so far as they were free from some of the restrictions of school, and had a kind of independent standing. They were allowed to keep their large attic, the bare walls of which were now half covered by Mab's drawings, and which Cicely's instinctive art of household management made to look more cheery and homelike than any other room in the house. They were snubbed sometimes by "parents," who thought the manners of these Miss St. Johns too easy and familiar, as if they were on an equality with their pupils; and by Miss Blandy, who considered them much too independent in their ways; and now and then had mortifications to bear which are not pleasant to girls. But there were two of them, which was a great matter; and in the continual conversation which they carried on about everything, they consoled each other. No doubt it was hard sometimes to hear music sounding from the open windows of the great house in the square, where their old schoolfellow, Miss Robinson, had come to live, and to see the carriages arriving, and all the glory of the ball-dresses, of which the two young governesses got a glimpse as they went out for a stroll on the beach in

the summer twilight, an indulgence which Miss Blandy disapproved of.

"Now why should people be so different?" Cicely said, moralizing; "why should we have so little, and Alice Robinson so much? It don't seem fair."

"And we are not even prettier than she is, or gooder — which we ought to be, if there is any truth in compensation," said Mab, with a laugh.

"Or happier," said Cicely, with a sigh. "She has the upper hand of us in everything, and no balance on the other side to make up for it. Stay, though, she has very droll people for father and mother, and we have a very fine gentleman for our papa."

"Poor papa!" said Mab. They interchanged moods with each other every ten minutes, and were never monotonous, or for a long time the same.

"You may say why should people be so different," said Cicely, forgetting that it was herself who said it. "There is papa, now; he is delightful, but he is trying. When one thinks how altered everything is — and those two little babies. But yet, you know, we ought to ask ourselves, 'Were we happier at home, or are we happier here?'"

"We have more variety here," said Mab decisively; "there is the sea, for one thing; there we had only the garden."

"You forget the common; it was as nice as any sea, and never drowned people, or did anything dangerous; and the forest, and the sunset."

"There are sunsets here," said Mab, — "very fine ones. We are not forgotten by the people who manage these things up above. And there is plenty of work; and the girls are amusing, and so are the parents."

"We should have had plenty of work at home," said Cicely; and then the point being carried as far as was necessary the discussion suddenly stopped. They were walking along the sands, almost entirely alone. Only here and there another group would pass them, or a solitary figure, chiefly tradespeople, taking their evening stroll. The fresh sea-breeze blew in their young faces, the soft dusk closed down over the blue water, which beat upon the shore at their feet in the softest whispering cadence. The air was all musical, thrilled softly by this hush of subdued sound. It put away the sound of the band at Miss Robinson's ball out of the girls' hearts. And yet balls are pleasant things at eighteen, and when two young creatures, quite deprived of such pleasures, turn their backs thus upon the en-

chanted place where the others are dancing, it would be strange if a touch of forlorn sentiment did not make itself felt in their hearts, though the soft falling of the dusk, and the hush of the great sea, and the salt air in their faces, gave them a pleasure, had they but known it, more exquisite than any mere ball, as a ball, ever confers. One only knows this, however, by reflection, never by immediate sensation; and so there was, as I have said, just a touch of pathos in their voices, and a sense of superiority, comfortable only in that it was superior, but slightly sad otherwise, in their hearts.

"I don't know what makes me go on thinking of home," said Cicely, after a pause. "If we had been at home we should have had more pleasure, Mab. The people about would have asked us — a clergyman's daughters always get asked; and there are very nice people about Brentburn, very different from the Robinsons and their class."

"We should have had no dresses to go in," said Mab. "How could we ever have had ball-dresses off papa's two hundred a year?"

"Ball-dresses sound something very grand, but a plain white tarlatan is not dear when one can make it up one's self. However, that is a poor way of looking at it," said Cicely, giving a little toss to her head, as if to throw off such unelevated thoughts. "There are a great many more important things to think of. How will he ever manage to bring up the two boys?"

Mab made a pause of reflection. "To be sure Aunt Jane is not their relation," she said, "and boys are more troublesome than girls. They want to have tutors and things, and to go to the university; and then what is the good of it all if they are not clever? Certainly boys are far more troublesome than girls."

"And then, if you consider papa," said Cicely, "that he is not very strong, and that he is old. One does not like to say anything disagreeable about one's papa, but what *did* he want with those children? Surely we were quite enough when he is so poor."

"There is always one thing he can do," said Mab. "Everybody says he is a very good scholar. He will have to teach them himself."

"We shall have to teach them," said Cicely with energy; "I know so well that this is what it will come to. I don't mean to teach them ourselves, for it is not much Latin I know, and you none, and I

have not a word of Greek — but they will come upon us, I am quite sure."

"You forget Mrs. St. John," said Mab.

Cicely gave a slight shrug of her shoulders, but beyond that she did not pursue the subject. Mrs. St. John's name stopped everything; they could not discuss her, nor express their disapprobation, and therefore they forbore religiously, though it was sometimes hard work.

"Blandina will think we are late," at last she said, turning round. This was their name for their former instructress, their present employer. Mab turned dutifully, obeying her sister's touch, but with a faint sigh.

"I hope they will be quiet at the Robinsons' as we are passing," the girl said. "What if they are in full swing, with the 'Blue Danube' perhaps! I hate to go in from a sweet night like this with noisy fiddles echoing through my head."

Cicely gave a slight squeeze of sympathy to her sister's arm. Do not you understand the girls, young readers? It was not the "Blue Danube" that was being played, but the old Lancers, the which to hear is enough to make wooden legs dance. Cicely and Mab pressed each other's arms, and glanced up at the window, where dancing shadows and figures were visible. They sighed and they went into their garret, avoiding the tacit disapproval of Miss Blandy's good-night. She did not approve of twilight walks. Why should they want to go out just then like the tradespeople, a thing which ladies never did? But if Miss Blandy had known that the girls were quite saddened by the sound of the music from the Robinsons', and yet could not sleep for listening to it, I fear she would have thought them very improper young persons indeed. She had forgotten how it felt to be eighteen — it was so long ago.

On the very next morning the news came of their stepmother's death. It was entirely unexpected by them, for they had no idea of the gradual weakness which had been stealing over that poor little woman, and they were moved by deep compunction as well as natural regret. It is impossible not to feel that we might have been kinder, might have made life happier to those that are gone — a feeling experienced the moment that we know them to be certainly gone, and inaccessible to all kindness. "Oh, poor Mrs. St. John!" said Mab, dropping a few natural tears. Cicely was more deeply

affected. She was the eldest and had thought the most; as for the young artist, her feeling ran into the tips of her fingers, and got expansion there; but Cicely had no such medium. She went about mournfully all day long, and in the evening Mab found her seated at the window of their attic, looking out with her eyes big with tears upon the darkening sea. When her sister touched her on the shoulder Cicely's tears fell. "Oh, poor Miss Brown!" she said, her heart having gone back to the time when they had no grievance against their kind little governess. "Oh, Mab, if one could only tell her how one was sorry! if she could only see into my heart now!"

"Perhaps she can," said Mab, awestricken and almost under her breath, lifting her eyes to the clear wistful horizon in which the evening star had just risen.

"And one could have said it only yesterday!" said Cicely, realizing for the first time that mystery of absolute severance; and what light thoughts had been in their minds yesterday! Sighs for Alice Robinson's ball, depression of soul and spirit caused by the distant strains of the Lancers, and the "Blue Danube" — while this tragedy was going on, and the poor soul who had been good to them, but to whom they had not been good, was departing, altogether and forever out of reach. Cicely in her sorrow blamed herself unjustly, as was natural, and mourned for the mystery of human shortsightedness as well as for Mrs. St. John. But I do not mean to say that this grief was very profound after the first sting, and after that startling impression of the impossibility of further intercourse was over. The girls went out quietly in the afternoon, and bought black stuff to make themselves mourning, and spoke to each other in low voices and grave tones. Their youthful vigour was subdued — they were overawed to feel as it were the wings of the great death-angel overshadowing them. The very sunshine looked dim, and the world enveloped in a cloud. But it was within a week or two of Miss Blandy's "breaking up," and they could not go away immediately. Miss Blandy half audibly expressed her satisfaction that Mrs. St. John was only their stepmother. "Had she been their own mother, what should we have done?" she said. So that it was not till the end of July, when the establishment broke up, that the girls were at last able to get home.

CHAPTER VI.
THE GIRLS AT HOME.

WE are so proud in England of having a word which means home, which some of our neighbours we are pleased to think have not, that, perhaps, it is a temptation to us to indulge in a general rapture over the word which has sometimes little foundation in reality. When Cicely and Mab walked to the rectory together from the station a suppressed excitement was in their minds. Since they first left for school, they had only come back for a few days each year, and they had not liked it. Their stepmother had been very kind, painfully kind; and anxious above measure that they should find everything as they had left it, and should not be disappointed or dull; but this very anxiety had made an end of all natural ease, and they had been glad when the moment came that released them. Now, poor woman, she had been removed out of their way; they were going back to take care of their father as they might have done had there been no second Mrs. St. John; and everything was as it had been, with the addition of the two babies, innocent little intruders whom the girls you may be sure could never find it in their hearts to be hard upon. Cicely and Mab took each others' hands instinctively as they left the station. It was the first of August, the very prime and glory of summer; the woods were at their fullest, untouched by any symptom of decay. The moorland side of the landscape was more wealthy and glorious still in its flush of heather. The common was not indeed one sheet of purple like a Scotch moor; but it was all lighted up between the gorse bushes with fantastic streaks and bands of colour blazing in the broad sunshine, and haunted by swarms of bees which made a hum in the air almost as sweet and all-pervading as the murmur of the sea. As they drew near the house their hearts began to beat louder. Would there be any visible change upon it? Would it look as it did when they were children, or with that indefinable difference which showed in *her* time? They did not venture to go the familiar way by the garden, but walked up solemnly like visitors to the front door. It was opened to them by a new maid whom they had never seen before, and who demurred slightly to giving them admittance. "Master ain't in," said the girl; "yes, miss, I know as you're expected," but still she hesitated. This was not the kind of welcome which the daughters of a house generally

receive. They went into the house nevertheless, Betsy following them. The blinds were drawn low over the windows, which were all shut; and though the atmosphere was stifling with heat, yet it was cold, miserably cold to Cicely and Mab. Their father's study was the only place that had any life in it. The rectory seemed full of nothing but old black heavy furniture, and heavier memories of some chilled and faded past.

"What a dreadful old place it is," said Mab; "it is like coming home to one's grave," and she sat down on the black haircloth easy-chair and shivered and cried; though this was coming home to the house in which she had been born.

"Now it will be better," said Cicely pulling up the blinds and opening the window. She had more command of herself than her sister. She let the sunshine come down in a flood across the dingy carpet, worn with the use of twenty years.

"Please, miss," said Betsy interposing, "missis would never have the blinds up in this room 'cause of spoiling the carpet. If master says so, I don't mind; but till he do"—and here Betsy put up her hand to the blind.

"Do you venture to meddle with what my sister does?" cried Mab, furious, springing from her chair.

Cicely only laughed. "You are a good girl to mind what your mistress said, but we are your mistresses now; you must let the window alone, for don't you see the carpet is spoiled already? I will answer to papa. What is it? Do you want anything more?"

"Only this, miss," said Betsy, "as it's the first laugh as has been heard here for weeks and weeks, and I don't like it neither, seeing as missis is in her grave only a fortnight to-day."

"I think you are a very good girl," said Cicely; and with that the tears stood in that changeable young woman's eyes.

No Betsy that ever was heard of could long resist this sort of treatment. "I tries to be, miss," she said with a curtsy and a whimper. "Maybe you'd like a cup of tea?" and after following them suspiciously all over the house she left them at last on this hospitable intent in the fading drawing-room, where they had both enshrined the memory of their mother. Another memory was there now, a memory as faded as the room, which showed in all kinds of feeble feminine decorations, bits of modern lace, and worked cushions and foolish footstools. The room was all pinafored and transmogrified, the old dark

picture-frames covered with yellow gauze, and the needlework in crackling semi-transparent covers.

"This was how she liked things, poor soul! Oh, Mab," cried Cicely, "how strange that she should die!"

"No stranger than that any one else should die," said Mab, who was more matter-of-fact.

"A great deal stranger! It was not strange at all that little Mary Seymour should die. One saw it in her eyes; she was like an angel; it was natural; but poor Miss Brown, who was quite happy working cushions and covering them up, and keeping the sun off the carpets, and making lace for the brackets! It looks as if there was so little sense or method in it," said Cicely. "She won't have any cushions to work up there."

"I dare say there won't be anything to draw up there," said Mab; "and yet I suppose I shall die too in time."

"When there are the four walls for Leonardo, and Michel Angelo, and Raphael, and poor Andrea," said the other. "How you forget! Besides, it is quite different. Hark! what was that?" she cried, putting up her hand.

What it was soon became very distinctly evident—a feeble little cry, speedily joined by another, and then a small weak chorus, two voices entangled together. "No, no; no ladies. Harry no like ladies," mixed with a whimpering appeal to "papa, papa."

"Come and see the pretty ladies. Harry never saw such pretty ladies," said the encouraging voice of Betsy in the passage.

The girls looked at each other, and grew red. They had made up their minds about a great many things, but never how they were to deal with the two children. Then Betsy appeared at the door, pushing it open before her with the tea-tray she carried. To her skirts were hanging two little boys, clinging to her, yet resisting her onward motion, and carried on by it in spite of themselves. They stared at the new-comers with big blue eyes wide open, awed into silence. They were very small and very pale, with light colourless limp locks falling over their little black dresses. The girls on their side stared silently too. There was not a feature in the children's faces which resembled their elder sisters. They were both little miniatures of Miss Brown.

"So these are the children," said Cicely, making a reluctant step forward; to which

Harry and Charley responded by a renewed clutch at Betsy's dress.

"Yes, miss; them's the children! and darlings they be," said Betsy, looking fondly at them as she set down the tea. Cicely made another step forward slowly and held out her hands to them; when the little boys set up a scream which rang through the house, and hiding their faces simultaneously in Betsy's gown howled to be taken away. Mab put up her hands to her ears, but Cicely, more anxious to do her duty, made another attempt. She stooped down and kissed or tried to kiss the little tear-stained faces, to which caress each small brother replied by pushing her away with a repeated roar.

"Don't you take no notice, miss. Let 'em alone, and they'll get used to you in time," said Betsy.

"Go away, go away! Harry no like 'oo," screamed the spokesman brother. No one likes to be repulsed even by a child. Cicely stumbled to her feet very red and uncomfortable. She stood ruefully looking after them as they were carried off after a good preliminary "shake," one in each of Betsy's red hands.

"There is our business in life," she said in a solemn tone. "Oh, Mab, Mab, what did papa want with these children? All the trouble of them will come on you and me."

Mab looked at her sister with a look of alarm, which changed, however, into laughter at sight of Cicely's solemn looks and the dreary presentiment in her face.

"You are excellent like that," she said; "and if you had only seen how funny you all looked when the little demons began to cry. They will do for models at all events, and I'll take to painting children. They say it's very good practice, and nursery pictures always sell."

These lighter suggestions did not, however, console Cicely. She walked about the room with clasped hands and a very serious face, neglecting her tea.

"Papa will never trouble himself about them," she said half to herself; "it will all fall on Mab and me. And boys! that they should be boys! We shall never be rich enough to send them to the university. Girls we might have taught ourselves; but when you think of Oxford and Cambridge—"

"We can't tell," said Mab; "how do you know I sha'n't turn out a great painter, and be able to send them wherever you like? for I am the brother and you are the sister, Ciss. You are to keep my

house, and have the spending of all the money. So don't be gloomy please, but pour out some tea. I wish though they were not quite so plain."

"So like their mother," said Cicely with a sigh.

"And so disagreeable; but it is funny to hear one speak for both as if the two were Harry. I am glad they are not girls. To give them a share of all we have I don't mind; but to teach them! with those white little pasty faces —"

"One can do anything when one makes up one's mind to it," said Cicely with a sigh.

At this moment the hall-door opened, and after an interval Mr. St. John came in with soft steps. He had grown old in these last years; bowed down with age and troubles. He came up to his daughters and kissed them, laying his hands upon their heads.

"I am very glad you have come home," he said, in a voice which was pathetic in its febleness. "You are all I have now."

"Not all you have, papa," said Mab; "we have just seen the little boys."

A momentary colour flushed over his pale face. "Ah, the babies," he said, "I am afraid they will be a great deal of trouble to you, my dears."

Cicely and Mab looked at each other, but they did not say anything—they were afraid to say something which they ought not to say. And what could he add after that? He took the cup of tea they offered him, and drank it standing, his tall frame with a stoop in it, which was partly age and partly weakness, coming against one tall window and shutting out the light. "But that you are older-looking," he said at last, "all this time might seem like a dream."

"A sad dream, papa," said Cicely, not knowing what to say.

"I cannot say that, my dear. I thank God I have had a great deal of happiness in my life; because we are sad for the moment we must not forget to thank Him for all His mercies," said Mr. St. John; and then with a change in his voice, he added, "Your aunt sends me word that she is coming soon to see you. She is a very strong woman for her years; I look older than she does; and it is a trouble to me now to go to town and back in one day."

"You have not been ill, papa?"

"No, Cicely, not ill; a little out of my usual," he said, "that is all. Now you are here, we shall fall into our quiet way again. The changes God sends we must

accept; but the little worries are trying, my dear. I am getting old, and am not so able to brave them; but all will be well now you are here."

"We shall do all we can," said Cicely; "but you must remember, papa, we are not used to housekeeping, and if we make mistakes at first —"

"I am not afraid of your mistakes," said Mr. St. John, looking at her with a faint smile. He had scarcely looked full at her before, and his eyes dwelt upon her face with a subdued pleasure. "You are your mother over again," he said. "You will be a blessing to me, Cicely, as she was."

The two girls looked at him strangely, with a flood of conflicting thoughts. How dared he speak of their mother? Was he relieved to be able to think of their mother without Miss Brown coming in to disturb his thoughts? If natural reverence had not restrained them, what a cross-examination they would have put him to! but as it was, their eager thoughts remained unsaid. "I will do all I can, papa, and so will Mab," said Cicely, faltering. And he put down his cup, and said, "God bless you, my dears," and went to his study as if they had never been absent at all, only out perhaps, as Mab said, for a rather long walk.

"I don't think he can have cared for her," said Cicely; "he is glad to get back to the idea of mamma; I am sure that is what he means. He is always kind, and of course he was kind to her; but there is a sort of relief in his tone—a sort of ease."

"That is all very well for us," said Mab; "but if you will think of it, it seems a little hard on poor Miss Brown."

This staggered Cicely, who loved justice. "But I think she should not have married him," she said. "It was easy to see that anybody could have married him who wished. I can see that now, though I never thought of it then. And, kind as it was of Aunt Jane, perhaps we should not have left him unprotected. You ought to have gone to school, Mab, because of your talent, and I should have stayed at home."

They decided, however, after a few minutes, that it was needless to discuss this possibility now, so long after it had become an impossibility. And then they went up-stairs to take off their travelling-dresses and make themselves feel at home. When they came down again, with their hair smooth, Cicely carrying her work-basket and Mab her sketch-book, and

seated themselves in the old faded room, from which the sunshine had now slid away, as the sun got westward, a bewildered feeling took possession of them. Had they ever been absent? had anything happened since that day when Aunt Jane surprised them in their pinafores? The still house, so still in the deep tranquillity of the country, after the hum of their schoolroom life and the noises of a town, seemed to turn round with them, as they looked out upon the garden, upon which no change seemed to have passed. "I declare," cried Mab, "there is exactly the same number of apples—and the same branch of that old plum-tree hanging loose from the wall!"

Thus the first evening passed like a dream. Mr. St. John came from his study to supper, and he talked a little, just as he had been in the habit of talking long ago, without any allusion to the past. He told them a few pieces of news about the parish, and that he would like them to visit the school. "It has been very well looked after lately," he said. Perhaps this meant by his wife—perhaps it did not; the girls could not tell. Then Betsy came in for prayers, along with a still younger sister of hers who had charge of the little boys; and by ten o'clock, as at Miss Blandy's, the door was locked, and the peaceful house wrapped in quiet. The girls looked out of their window upon the soft stillness with the strangest feelings. The garden paths were clearly indicated by a feeble veiled moon, and the trees which thickened in clouds upon the horizon. There was not a sound anywhere in the tranquil place except the occasional bark of that dog, who somewhere, far or near, always indicates existence in a still night in the country. The stillness fell upon their souls. "He never asked what we were going to do," said Mab, for they were silenced too, and spoke to each other only now and then, chilled out of the superabundance of their own vitality. "But he thinks with me that the children are to be our business in life," said Cicely, and then they went to bed, taking refuge in the darkness. For two girls so full of conscious life, tingling to the finger-points with active faculties and power, it was a chilly home-coming, yet not so unusual either. When the young creatures come home, with their new lives in their hands to make something of for good or evil, do not we often expect them to settle down to the level of the calm old lives which are nearly worn out, and find fault with them if it is a struggle? Mr. St. John

felt that it was quite natural his girls should come home and keep his house for him, and take the trouble of the little boys, and visit the schools—so natural that when he had said, "Now you are here, we shall fall into our quiet way again," it seemed to him that everything was said that needed to be said.

In the morning the children were found less inaccessible, and made friends with by dint of lumps of sugar and bits of toast, of which Mab was prodigal. They were very tiny, delicate, and colourless, with pale hair, and pale eyes; but they were not wanting in some of the natural attractions of children. Charley was the backward one, and had little command of language. Harry spoke for both; and I will not say it was easy for these girls, unaccustomed to small children, to understand even him. Mr. St. John patted their heads and gave them a smile each by way of blessing; but he took little further notice of the children. "I believe Annie, the little maid, is very kind to them," he said. "I cannot bear to hear them crying, my dears; but now you are here all will go well."

"But, papa," said Cicely, "will it be right for us to stay at home, when you have them to provide for, and there is so little money?"

"Right for you to stay? Where could you be so well as at home?" said the curate, perturbed. The girls looked at each other, and this time it was Mab who was bold, and ventured to speak.

"Papa, it is not that. Supposing that we are best at home" (Mab said this with the corners of her mouth going down, for it was not her own opinion), "yet there are other things to consider. We should be earning something —"

Mr. St. John got up almost impatiently for him. "I have never been left to want," he said. "I have been young, and now I am old, but I have never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging their bread. Providence will raise up friends for the children; and we have always had plenty. If there is enough for me, there is enough for you."

And he went out of the room as nearly angry as it was possible for his mild nature to be. Cicely and Mab once more looked at each other wondering. "Papa is crazy, I think," said Mab, who was the most self-assertive; but Cicely only heaved a sigh, and went out to the hall to brush his hat for him, as she remembered her mother used to do. Mr. St. John liked this kind of tendance. "You are a

good girl, Cicely; you are just such another as your mother," he said, as he took the hat from her; and Cicely divined that the late Mrs. St. John had not shown him this attention, which I think pleased her on the whole.

"But, papa, I am afraid Mab was right," she said. "You must think it over, and think what is best for Mab."

"Why should she be different from you?" said Mr. St. John, feeling in his breast-pocket for the familiar prayer-book which lay there. It was more important to him to make sure it was safe, than to decide what to do with his child.

"I don't know why, but we *are* different. Dear papa, you must think, if you please, what is best."

"It is nonsense, Cicely; she must stay where she is, and make herself happy. A good girl is always happy at home," said Mr. St. John; "and, of course, there is plenty — plenty for all of us. You must not detain me, my dear, nor talk about business this first morning. Depend upon it," said Mr. St. John, raising his soft, feeble hand to give emphasis to his words, "it is always best for you to be at home."

What a pity that children and women are not always convinced when the head of the house thus lays down the law! Cicely went back into the dining-room where they had breakfasted, shaking her head, without being aware of the gesture. "Why should I depend upon it?" she said. "Depend upon it! I may be quite willing to do it, for it is my duty; but why should I depend upon it as being the best?"

"What are you saying, Cicely?"

"Nothing, dear; only papa is rather odd. Does he think that two hundred a year is a great fortune? or that two of us, and two of them, and two maids (though they are little ones), and himself, can get on upon two hundred a year?"

"I must paint," said Mab; "I must paint! I'll tell you what I shall do. You are a great deal more like a Madonna than most of the women who have sat for her. I will paint a Holy Family from you and *them*. They are funny little pale things, but we could light them up with a little colour; and they are *real* babies, you know," Mab said, looking at them seriously, with her head on one side, as becomes a painter. She had posed the two children on the floor: the one seated firmly with his little legs stretched out, the other leaning against him; while she

walked up and down, with a pencil in her hand, studying them. "Stay still a moment longer, and I will give you a lump of sugar," she said.

"Harry like sugar," said the small spokesman, looking up at her. Charley said nothing. He had his thumb, and half the little hand belonging to it, in his mouth, and sucked it with much philosophy. "Or perhaps I might make you a peasant woman," said Mab, "with one of them on your back. They are nature, Ciss. You know how Mr. Lake used to go on, saying nature was what I wanted. Well, here it is."

"I think you are as mad as papa," said Cicely, impatient; "but I must order the dinner, and look after the things. That's nature for me. Oh, dear — oh, dear! we shall not long be able to have any dinner, if we go on with such a lot of servants. Two girls, two boys, two maids, and two hundred a year! You might as well try to fly," said Cicely, shaking her pretty head.

CHAPTER VII.

NEWS.

PERHAPS it had been premature of the girls to speak to their father of their future, and what they were to do, on the very first morning after their return; but youth is naturally impatient, and the excitement of one crisis seems to stimulate the activity of all kinds of plans and speculations in the youthful brain; and then perhaps the chill of the house, the rural calm of the place, had frightened them. Cicely, indeed, knew it was her duty and her business to stay here, whatever happened; but how could Mab bear it, she said to herself — Mab, who required change and novelty, whose mind was full of such hopes of seeing and of doing? When their father had gone out, however, they threw aside their grave thoughts for the moment, and dawdled the morning away, roaming about the garden, out and in a hundred times, as it is so pleasant to do on a summer day in the country, especially to those who find in the country the charm of novelty. They got the children's hats, and took them out to play on the sunny grass, and run small races along the paths.

"Please, miss, not to let them run too much," said little Annie, Betsy's sister, who was the nurse, though she was but fifteen. "Please, miss, not to let 'em roll on the grass."

"Why, the grass is as dry as the carpet; and what are their little legs good for but to run with?" said Cicely.

Whereupon little Annie made up a solemn countenance, and said, "Please, miss, I promised missis——"

Mab rushed off with the children before the sentence was completed. "That's why they are so pale," cried the impetuous girl; "poor little white-faced things! But we never promised missis. Let us take them into our own hands."

"You are a good girl to remember what your mistress said," said Cicely, with dignity, walking out after her sister in very stately fashion. And she reproved Mab for her rashness, and led the little boys about, promenading the walks. "We must get rid of these two maids," she said, "or we shall never be allowed to have anything our own way."

"But you said they were good girls for remembering," said Mab, surprised.

"So they were; but that is not to say I am going to put up with it," said Cicely, drawing herself to her full height, and looking Miss St. John, as Mab asserted she was very capable of doing when she pleased.

"You are very funny, Cicely," said the younger sister; "you praise the maids, and yet you want to get rid of them; and you think what 'missis' made them promise is nonsense, yet there you go walking about with these two mites as if you had promised missis yourself."

"Hush!" said Cicely, and then the tears came into her eyes. "She is dead!" said this inconsistent young woman, with a low voice full of remorse. "It would be hard if one did not give into her at first about her own little boys."

After this dawdling in the morning, they made up their minds to work in the afternoon. Much as they loved the sunshine, they were obliged to draw down the blinds with their own hands, to the delight of Betty, to whom Cicely was obliged to explain that this was not to save the carpet. It is difficult to know what to do in such circumstances, especially when there is nothing particular to be done. It was too hot to go out; and as for beginning needle-work in cold blood the first day you are in a new place, or have come back to an old one, few girls of eighteen and nineteen are so virtuous as that. One thing afforded them a little amusement, and that was to pull things about and alter their arrangement, and shape the room to their own mind. Cicely took down

a worked banner-screen which hung from the mantelpiece, and which offended her fastidious taste; or rather, she began to unscrew it, removing first the crackling semi-transparent veil that covered it. "Why did she cover them up so?" cried Cicely, impatiently.

"To keep them clean, of course," said Mab.

"But why should they be kept clean? We are obliged to fade and lose our beauty. It is unnatural to be spick and span, always clean and young, and new. Come down, you gaudy thing!" she cried. Then with her hand still grasping it, a compunction seized her. "After all, why shouldn't she leave something behind her—something to remember her by. She had as much right here as we have, after all. She ought to leave some trace of her existence here."

"She has left her children—trace enough of her existence!" cried Mab.

Cicely was struck by this argument. She hesitated a minute, with her hand on the screen, then hastily detached it, and threw it down. Then two offensive cushions met her eye, which she put in the same heap. "The little boys might like to have them when they grow up," she added, half apologetically, to herself.

And with these changes something of the old familiar look began to come into the faded room. Mab had brought out her drawing-things, but the blinds were fluttering over the open windows, shutting out even the garden; and there was nothing to draw. And it was afternoon, which is not a time to begin work. She fixed her eyes upon a large chiffonier, with glass doors, which held the place of honour in the room. It was mahogany, like everything else in the house.

"I wonder what sort of a man Mr. Chester is," she said; "or what he meant by buying all that hideous furniture—a man who lives in Italy, and is an antiquary, and knows about pictures. If it was not for the glass doors, how like a hearse that chiffonier would be. I mean a catafalque. What is a catafalque, Cicely? A thing that is put up in churches when people are dead? I hope Mr. Chester when he dies will have just such a tomb."

"It is not so bad as the big bookcase in the study," said Cicely; "certainly things are better nowadays. If I had plenty of money, how I should like to furnish this room all over again, with bright young things, not too huge; little

sofas that would move anywhere when you touched them, and soft chairs. They must be covered in amber——"

"No—blue!" cried Mab.

"Soft amber—amber with a bloom of white in it——"

"In this sunny room!" cried Mab.

"What are you thinking of? No; it must be a cool colour—a sort of moonlighty blue—pale, pale; or tender fairy green."

"What is fairy green? Amber is my colour—it would be lovely; of course I don't mean to say it wouldn't fade. But then if one were rich the pleasure would be to let it fade, and then have all the fun over again, and choose another," said Cicely, with a sigh over this impossible delight.

"Things sometimes improve by fading," said the artist. "I like the faded tints—they harmonize. Hush, Cicely!—oh, stop your tidying—there is some one at the door."

"It cannot be any one coming to call so soon?" said Cicely, startled.

"But it is—listen! I can hear Betsy saying, 'This way, ma'am; this way.' And Mab closed her sketch-book, and sat very upright and expectant on her chair; while Cicely, throwing (I am ashamed to say) her spoils under a sofa, took up her needlework by the wrong end, and, putting on a portentous face of gravity and absorbed occupation, waited for the expected visitor.

A moment after the door was flung open, but not by Betsy; and Miss Maydew, flushed with her walk from the station, as when they had first seen her, with the same shawl on, and I almost think the same bonnet (but that was impossible), stood before them, her large white handkerchief in her hand. She was too hot to say anything, but dropped down on the first chair she came to, leaving the door open, which made a draught, and blew about her ribbons violently. "I know it is as much as my life is worth," said Miss Maydew; "but, oh, how delicious it is to be in a draught!"

"Aunt Jane!" the girls cried, and rushed at her with unfeigned relief. They were more familiar with her now than they had been four years ago. They took off her great shawl for her, and loosed her bonnet-strings. "Papa told us you were coming," they cried; "but we did not hope for you so soon. How kind of you to come to-day!"

"Oh, my dears," said Aunt Jane, "I did not mean to come to-day; I came to

see how you were taking it; and what your papa means to do. As soon as I saw it in the paper I thought, oh, my poor, poor children, and that helpless old man! What are they to do?"

"Do you mean about Mrs. St. John?" said Cicely, growing grave. "Papa is very composed and kind, and indeed I can do all he wants. Aunt Jane——"

"About Mrs. St. John? Poor woman, I have nothing to say against her—but she is taken away from the evil to come," said Miss Maydew. "No, no, it was not about Mrs. St. John I was thinking, it was about something much more serious. Not that anything could be more serious than a death; but in a worldly point of view!"

"What is it?" they both said in a breath. The idea of news was exciting to them, even though, as was evident from their visitor's agitation, it was disagreeable news they were about to hear. Miss Maydew drew with much excitement from her pocket a copy of the *Times*, very tightly folded together to enable it to enter there, and opened it with trembling hands.

"There it is! Oh, my poor, poor children!—imagine my feelings—it was the very first thing I saw when I took up my paper this morning," she said.

The girls did not immediately take in the full meaning of the intimation which they read with two startled faces close together over the old lady's shoulder. "At Castellamare, on the 15th July, the Rev. Edward Chester, Rector of Brentburn, Berks."

"But we don't know him," said Mab, bewildered.

Cicely, I think, had a remark of the same kind on her lips; but she stopped suddenly and clasped her hands together and gave a low cry.

"Ah, *you* understand, Cicely!" said Miss Maydew, wiping her forehead with her handkerchief; "now let us consult what is to be done. What is the date? I was so agitated I never thought of the date! The 15th. Oh, my dear, here is a fortnight lost!"

"But what can be done?" said Cicely, turning a pathetic glance upon the old room which had seemed so melancholy to her yesterday, and the tons of mahogany which she had just been criticising. How kind, and friendly, and familiar they had become all at once; old, dear friends, who belonged to her no more.

"Mr. Chester, the rector!" said Mab, with sudden apprehension. "Do you mean that something will happen to papa?"

"There is this to be done," said the old lady, "your poor good father has been here for twenty years; the people ought to be fond of him—I do not know whether they are, for a parish is an incomprehensible thing, as your poor dear grandfather always used to say—but they ought to be; I am sure he has trudged about enough, and never spared himself, though I never thought him a good preacher, so far as that goes. But he ought to have a great many friends after living here for twenty years."

"But, Aunt Jane, tell us, tell us—what good will that do?"

"It might do a great deal if they would exert themselves. They might get up a petition, for instance—at once—to the lord chancellor; they might employ all their influence. It is not a rich parish, nor a large parish, but there are always gentry in it. Oh, a great deal might be done if only people would exert themselves! It is dreadful to think that a fortnight has been lost."

Cicely, who was not much consoled by this hope, sat down with a very pale countenance and a sudden constriction at her heart. She was almost too much bewildered to realize all that it meant; enough lay on the surface to fill her soul with dismay. Mab, who had less perception of the urgent character of the calamity, was more animated.

"I thought you meant *we* could do something," she said. "Oh, Aunt Jane, could not we go to the chancellor, if that is the man. The parish? I don't see why they should take the trouble. It will not hurt them. They will have a young, well-off man instead of an old, poor man. Couldn't *we* go to the lord chancellor, Aunt Jane?"

Miss Maydew's eyes lighted up for a moment. She seemed to see herself approaching that unknown potentate as lovely ladies went to kings in the days of romance, with a child in each hand. She felt how eloquent she could be, how convincing. She felt herself capable of going down on her knees and asking him whether the father of those two sweet girls was to starve in his old age? All this appeared before her like a dream. But alas! common sense soon resumed its sway; she shook her head. "I don't know if that would do any good," she said.

"And *we* could not get up a petition from the parish," said Cicely; "whatever the people may do we cannot stir in it. Oh, Aunt Jane, how foolish, how wrong of us never to think of this! I have thought

that papa was old and that we should have to maintain ourselves and the two babies if—anything happened; but I never remembered that it all hung upon some one else's life. Oh, it does seem hard!" cried the girl, clasping her hands. "Papa has done all the work since ever I was born, but yet he has only been here on sufferance, ready to be turned out at a moment's notice. Oh, it is wrong, it is wrong!"

"Not exactly at a moment's notice," said Miss Maydew; "there is six weeks or three months, or something, I forget how long."

And then there was a painful pause. Mab cried a little, having her feelings most upon the surface, but Cicely sat quite silent and pale with her eyes fixed upon the white blinds which flapped against the open windows. All at once she got up and drew one of them up with a rapid impatient hand. "I want air, I want light," she said in a stifled voice, and put herself full in the intrusive sunshine, which made Miss Maydew blink her old eyes.

"You will give yourself a headache, my dear, and that will not mend matters," she said.

Cicely's heart was very heavy. She drew down the blind again and walked up and down the room in her agitation. "Five of us to provide for now—and that is not the worst; what is papa to do? How can he live with everything taken from him? Oh, go to the chancellor, or any one, if it will do any good! It is terrible for papa."

It was while they were still in this agitated state that Betsy threw open the door again, and Mrs. Ascott, of the Heath, one of the greatest ladies in the parish, came in. She was not heated, like poor old Miss Maydew, with walking, but fresh and well dressed from her carriage, and tranquil as prosperity and comfort could make her. The girls made that sudden effort, which women so often have to make, to receive her as if nothing had happened, as if their minds were as easy and their circumstances as agreeable as her own. She inquired about their journey, about their school, about how they found their papa looking, about the "sad trials" he had gone through, all in a sweet even tone, with smiles or serious looks, as became her words, and hoped that now they had come back she should see them often at the Heath. "You are the musical one, Cicely," she said; "I know Mab draws. It is always nice when sisters have each their distinction, that people can't mistake. My husband always says girls are so like

each other. What is your voice? contralto? oh, a good second is such a want here. We are all more or less musical, you know."

"My voice is not much one way or the other," said Cicely. "Mab sings better than I do though she is the one who draws."

"But I fear," said Miss Maydew, clearing her throat and interfering, "unless something is done they will not be here long to be of use to any one. We have just had news —"

"Ah, about poor Mr. Chester," said Mrs. Ascott, with the slightest of glances at the stranger; "I saw it in the papers. Will that affect your papa?"

"Unless" — Miss Maydew put herself forward squarely and steadily — "something is done."

Mrs. Ascott looked at the old lady for the first time. She had thought her an old nurse at first — for the good woman was not of patrician appearance, like the girls, who were St. Johns. "Unless — something — is done? I am sure we will all do anything that is possible. What can be done?"

"Hush! my dear, hush! She does not know I belong to you," whispered Miss Maydew. "I think a great deal might be done. If Mr. St. John's friends were to get up a petition to the lord chancellor at once — stating how long he had been here, and how much beloved he was, and the whole state of the case. I don't personally know his lordship," said the old lady; "but he can't be a bad man or he never would have risen to that position. I can't believe but what if the case were put fully before him, he would give Mr. St. John the living. It seems so much the most natural thing to do."

"Dear me, so it does!" said Mrs. Ascott. "How clever of you to have thought of it! I will speak to my husband, and see what he says."

"And if there is any one else whom you can influence — to do good it should be general — from the whole parish," said Miss Maydew — "from all classes; and it ought to be done at once."

"To be sure," said Mrs. Ascott. "I assure you I will speak to my husband." She got up to take her leave, a little frightened by the vehemence of the stranger, and rather elated at the same time by the sense of having a mission. Miss Maydew went with her to the very door.

"At once," she said, "at once! It is a fortnight already since the rector died. If

the parish means to do anything, you should not lose a day."

"No: I see, I see! I will go at once and speak to my husband," cried the visitor escaping hastily. Miss Maydew returned to her seat breathing a sigh of satisfaction. "There, girls! I have set it going at least. I have started it. That was a nice woman — if she exerts herself, I don't doubt that it will be all right. What a blessing she came while I was here."

"I hope it is all right," said Cicely doubtfully; "but she is not very — not very, *very* sensible, you know. But she is always kind. I hope she will not do anything foolish. Is that papa she is talking to?" cried the girl alarmed, for there were sounds of commotion in the hall. A silence fell upon even the chief conspirator, when she felt that Mr. St. John was near — the possibility that her tactics might not be quite satisfactory alarmed her. She withdrew into a corner, instinctively getting the girls and a considerable mass of furniture between herself and any one coming in at the door.

"I do not know what Mrs. Ascott is talking of," said the curate. "Is tea ready, my dear, for I have a great deal to do? What have you been putting into that good woman's head? She is talking of a petition, and of the lord chancellor, and of bad news. I hope you are not a politician, Cicely. What is it all about?"

"Here is Aunt Jane, papa," said Cicely, who was not more comfortable than Miss Maydew. And the old lady had to get up and stretch out her hand to Mr. St. John over the sofa, which was her bulwark in chief.

"But I wonder what she meant about bad news," he went on; "she seemed to think it affected us. My dears, have you heard anything?"

"Oh, papa, very bad news," said Cicely with tears in her eyes. "It is in the paper. Mrs. Ascott had seen it, and that is what we were talking about. Oh, dear papa, don't be cast down. Perhaps it may not be so bad as we think. Something may be done; or at the very worst we are both able and willing to work — Mab and I."

"I don't know what you mean," said Mr. St. John, and he read the announcement without much change of countenance. "Dear me, so he is gone at last!" he said. "I have long expected this. His health has been getting worse and worse for years. Poor Chester! has he really gone at last? I remember him at college. He

was a year younger than I, but always sickly. Poor fellow! and he was a great deal better off than I am, but never got the good of it. What a lesson it is, my dears!"

"But, oh, papa," cried Mab, who was the most impatient, "it is a great deal more than a lesson. Think what consequences it will bring to you—and us—and everybody."

He looked at her with a half-smile. "Little Mab," he said, "teaching her elders. Harry will begin soon. Yes, to be sure; we have got fond of this place; it seems hard that we should have to go."

"But, papa, where shall we go? What shall we do? What is to become of us?" said Cicely.

Mr. St. John shook his head. "If you will consider that I have only just seen it this moment," he said, "you will see that I cannot be expected all at once—was this what Mrs. Ascott was talking of? And what did she mean by petitions, and the lord chancellor? I hope you have not been putting anything into her head?"

There was a pause—the girls looked at each other, and blushed as if they were the culprits; then Miss Maydew came boldly to the front. "It was not the fault of the girls, Mr. St. John; on the contrary they were against it. But I thought there was no harm in saying that a petition from the parish—to the lord chancellor—a well-signed petition, as there must be so many people here who are fond of you—and that no doubt he would give you the living if he understood the circumstances."

"I a beggar for a living!" said Mr. St. John. "I who have never asked for anything in my life!" A deep flush came upon his delicate pale face. He had borne a great many more serious blows without wincing. Death had visited him, and care dwelt in his house—and he had borne these visitations placidly; but there was one flaw in his armour, and this unlooked-for assault found it out. A flame of injured pride blazed up in him, swift as fire and as glowing. "I thought I should have died without this," he said with a groan, half fierce, half bitter. "What was it to you? I never asked you for anything! Oh, this is hard—this is very hard to bear."

In the memory of man it had never been known that Mr. St. John thus complained before. The girls had never heard his voice raised or seen the flush of anger on his face; and they were overawed by it. This kind of sentiment too has always a certain fictitious grandeur to the inexperienced. Never to ask for anything; to

wait—patient merit scorning all conflict with the unworthy—till such time as its greatness should be acknowledged. This sounds very sublime in most cases to the youthful soul.

"Well, Mr. St. John," said Miss Maydew, "you may say I have no right to interfere; but if you had stooped to ask for something it might have been a great deal better for your family. Besides you have not asked for anything now. I am not responsible for my actions to any one, and I hope I may do either for you or anybody else whatever I please in the way of service. If the lord chancellor does give you the living——"

Mr. St. John smiled. "I need not make myself angry," he said, "for it is all sheer ignorance. The living is a college living. I don't know what your ideas are on the subject, but the lord chancellor has as much to do with it as you have. Cicely, let us have tea."

Miss Maydew shrivelled up upon her chair. She sat very quiet, and did not say a word after this revelation. What she had done would have troubled her mind little; but that she had done nothing after risking so much was hard to bear. After this little ebullition, however, the curate fell back into his usual calm. He spoke to them in his ordinary way. His voice resumed its tranquil tone. He took his tea, which was a substantial meal, doing justice to the bread and butter, and on the whole showed signs of being more concerned for Mr. Chester than he was for himself.

"I remember him at college—we were of the same college," he said; "but he always the richest, much the best off. How little that has to say to a man's happiness! Poor Chester was never happy; he might have been very well here. How much I have had to be thankful for here! but it was not his disposition. He was good-looking too when he was young, and did very well in everything. Any one would have said he had a far better chance for a happy life than I had."

The gentle old man grew quite loquacious in this contrast, though he was in general the most humble-minded of men; and the two girls sat and listened, giving wondering glances at each other, and blushing red with that shame of affection which lively girls perhaps are particularly disposed to feel when their parents mander. This sort of domestic criticism, even though unexpressed, was hard upon Mr. St. John, as upon all such feeble good men. His last wife had adored him at all

times, as much when he was foolish as when he was wise. She would have given him the fullest adhesion of her soul now, and echoed every word he said; but the girls did not. They would have preferred to silence him, and were ashamed of his gentle self-complacency. And yet it was quite true that he felt himself a happier man than Mr. Chester, and higher in the scale of merit though not of fortune; and the calm with which he took this event, which was neither more nor less than ruin to him, was fine in its way.

"But what are we to do, papa?" Cicely ventured to ask him, looking up into his face with big anxious eyes, as he took his last cup of tea.

"My dear, we must wait and see," he said. "There is no very immediate hurry. Let us see first who is appointed, and what the new rector intends to do."

"But, Mr. St. John, you are a very learned man—and if it is a college living"—suggested Miss Maydew.

"It is my own college too," he said reflectively; "and I suppose I am now one of the oldest members of it. It would not be amiss if they let me stay here the rest of my days. But I never was distinguished. I never was a fellow, or anything. I never could push myself forward. No—we must just wait and see what is going to happen. A few days or a few weeks will make little difference. Compose yourselves, my dears," said Mr. St. John. "I am not very anxious after all."

"I wonder if he would be anxious if you were all starving," cried Miss Maydew, as the girls walked with her to the station in the evening. "Oh, Cicely, I know I oughtn't to say anything to you about your papa. But if he has not been anxious, others have been anxious for him. Your poor mother! how she slaved to keep everything as it ought to be; and even poor Miss Brown. It did not cost him much to marry her—but it cost her her life."

"Aunt Jane!" cried both the girls indignant.

"Well, my dears! She might have been living now, a respectable single woman, doing her duty, as she was capable of doing; instead of which what must she do but bring a couple of white-faced babies into the world that nobody wanted, and die of it. Yes, she did die of it. You don't understand these things—you are only children. And all because he was what you call kind-hearted, and could not bear to see her cry, forsooth. As if the

best of us were not obliged both to cry ourselves and see others cry often enough! But they never thought what they were doing; and the ones to suffer will be you."

"Aunt Jane, you ought not to speak so of papa."

"I know I shouldn't, my dear—and I humbly beg your pardons," said Aunt Jane drying her eyes.

"And we ought not to have left him unprotected," said Cicely with a sigh.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

THE DUTCH AND THEIR DEAD CITIES.*

THE freshest impressions are most fruitful of pleasant associations, and we shall always be glad that we landed in Holland on our first visit to the Continent. But we can understand how that most interesting country is not half so much appreciated as it deserves to be; nor can we say how we might have found it ourselves, had we visited it after travelling elsewhere. Possibly it might have appeared to us, as to so many other people, dull, flat, and unprofitable. As it is, although we must confess that a little of it goes comparatively far, for its landscapes are undeniably tame, and the plan of its cities somewhat monotonous, yet we always revisit it with ever-renewed satisfaction. The change thither is complete, and everything that meets the eye refreshingly novel and original. You may even experience something of adventure on the passage, and get your first glimpses at the life of our amphibious neighbours in crossing the seas we have so often disputed with them. For ourselves we were fortunate in that way, though the steamer on which we embarked on our maiden voyage—she hailed from Leith, and was "missing" afterwards, one foul day when she had been sent out overladen—made a singularly tedious passage of it. We brought up in a fog on some fishing-banks in mid-ocean, and by the light of an outbreak of watery sunshine, found ourselves in the middle of a fleet of Dutch fishing-boats, who traded haddocks with us against bottles of schiedam. These clumsy wall-sided pinks, with the interminable streamers hanging pendant from the gilded vanes at their mastheads, as they lay rocking lazily among wreaths of aqueous vapour, prepared us to appreciate those master-

* *La Hollande Pittoresque, Voyage aux Villes Mortes du Zuiderzée.* Par M. Henri Havard. E. Plon et Cie., Paris.

pieces of Van de Velde and Backhuizen we were happily soon to have opportunities of admiring. Their build had scarcely changed by a line in the course of centuries, any more than the serviceable costumes of their shaggy-trousered crews. Our bartering done, we made a fresh departure, groping our way half-speed for the mouth of the Maas. It may have been as well for us that we took it easily and kept the lead going, when we fancied that we ought to be nearing our destination; for our compass had got all abroad, in sympathy with a shifting cargo of pig-iron, and our skipper had to confess that he had lost his way, and could tell as little as his compass about our bearings. There we lay, if not all that day, at least a good part of the morning, shifting about with the metal and groundswell, till a sudden breeze swept aside the fog, and the sun burst out in all his brilliance. Since then we have seen him rise repeatedly in various latitudes just as we had sighted unfamiliar shores, but he has never showed us anything that impressed us more. Yet as we steamed back, retracing the way we had overrun, there was little visible to landward but the low lines of the sand-dunes, heaped the one behind the other. The coast of Holland, for all we could see of it, might have been nothing but a shifting sandbank, the favourite fishing-ground of the sea-birds that were swooping and clamouring over it, had it not been for a white point or two that occasionally appeared to vanish again over the sky-line. These told of the presence of life and indefatigable industry; for the revolving points were the tips of the windmill-sails, — the motive power of the pumps that are perpetually going, and keeping the soaking country from being swamped. As you see how low the land lies when you open the broad estuary of the river, you begin to be conscious of a certain uneasiness lest you should chance to go down yourself in the course of your flying visit. The shoaling channel seems as likely to let the sea run in as to let the river run off. The Dutch have evidently been doing their best to speed the parting guest, who might easily make himself boisterously unpleasant on occasion, although quiet enough now. His bed is narrowed and deepened by formidable embankments, but he is become sluggish and dull, and is loath to leave it. The Maas has changed his nature with his name, and you would never recognize him for the impetuous Meuse you have since seen hurrying along at the foot of the

rocky fortifications of Dinant. The soil and landslips he brings down in solution have plenty of time to settle here, and the buoys bobbing about on the shallows on all sides of you look like the heads of a flock of monster seals. The manufacture of those indispensable water-marks is become a staple industry in some of the stagnating seaports that are gradually being left high and dry, as land and sea are changing their levels; and, of course, the trade of the pilot is equally flourishing. Were it not that these worthy gentlemen were as safe and sure as they seem to be slow, more ships would discharge their valuable cargoes in the labyrinth of banks and shoals that embarrass the commerce of the Netherlands. The first Dutchman you meet off his native shores boards you in a wreath of smoke of his own raising. His great porcelain pipe "goes of itself," and he scarcely troubles himself to take his hands from his voluminous pockets to scramble up the side, or exchange salutations with the captain. He gives his leisurely orders chiefly by pantomime, with his eyes fixed contemplatively on the Maas as if he were seeking inspiration for a sonnet in the sluggish eddies of its muddy tide. But the type of man is highly characteristic not only of his particular calling, but of his country-people in general. The blank inexpression of his face conceals a deal of shrewd intelligence as well as professional knowledge; and the square-built form wrapped up in the Flushing pea-jacket is capable of as much exertion as endurance. He is quite the sort of man you could imagine putting out to sea in any weather, fortified by Calvinistic acquiescence in the purposes of Providence, as well as by constitutional indifference to danger, and a comfortable expectation of handsome salvage-money; or working like a beaver behind the dams, when the wind from the west was blowing up a hurricane, and the surf was beating breaches from the side of the angry ocean; or opening the sluices if the worst came to the worst, and submerging his enemies with his personal property. It was just such a rough, patriotic sea-dog, no doubt, who came off to the flotilla of the "beggars of the sea," when Lumey de la Mark and the Seigneur of Trelong seized on the Spanish fortress of Brille and "robbed the Duke of Alva of his spectacles." It was that stamp of sturdy fellow who used to sweep the narrow seas under Van Reuter, or sail in cock-boats into Arctic darkness and ice-fields under such adventurous navigators as Heemskirk.

In the mean time, as we said, our friend is smoking like a chimney, and, early as it is, applying himself from time to time to the flask of schiedam he produces from his pocket. Those worthy Netherlanders live by gin and tobacco; the heavy clouds breaking up on the horizon ahead on your starboard bow came from the smoke of the numerous distilleries of the flourishing town of Schiedam. And we can hardly conceive the most fanatical of temperance lecturers having the hardihood to persist in a professional tour of the United Provinces, after experiencing the depressing effects of the rawness of their mornings and evenings. Like Mynheer Van Dunk of the national ballad, the Dutchmen, though great drinkers, are no drunkards, chiefly for the reason that in their peculiar climate their sluggish constitutions take a deal of stimulating. Considerably beyond the point where the average Englishman begins to feel decidedly the worse for liquor, the Dutchman is only imbibing medicinally, and he swallows like the sand-beds of his Haarlem tulip-gardens. If he took the pledge, he would have to change his habits and renounce all his favourite enjoyments. For the best part of the year, the whole of his country is enveloped in fogs or dense driving rain. When it does clear up, away from the sand-beds on the coast everything is left soaking; pools are forming in the bottom of the polders, the canals are brimming over, and there is a constant splash of water in course of falling from the pumps. The country people are out in steaming mists, on meadows divided by broad water-ditches. When they go to market, they travel on the canal by *trekschuit* or jog along on a causeway running through a waste of water. The wealthy citizen, as likely as not, has perched his mansion upon piles driven into the liquid sand that underlies his cellarage. In any case his front windows look out on one canal, his back windows on another: around him is a forest of masts and yards with sails of all sizes hung out to dry, while the great place at the corner of the street is a basin covered with boats and barges. When he takes his pleasure of an evening in his pretty suburban garden, he reposes in a summer-house reared upon poles over a canal that is brilliantly carpeted by duck-weed. The air about him is of course impregnated with damp which is often overcharged with unwholesome exhalations. Naturally he must correct that deleterious atmosphere with ardent spirits and strong to-

bacco; and as if to make the agreeable regimen easy for over-tender consciences, beneficent nature leaves him little choice in the matter. The inhabitants of great part of Holland are in the position of the seaman in the "Ancient Mariner,"—with "water, water everywhere," there is not a drop that is fit to drink. Foreigners fall back on the bottled produce of the German springs; the natives dash their beverage with schiedam, and work the better for it and live the longer.

We grant that, to live in the country with comfort, a man ought to have been born and brought up in it; but it is the very circumstances of the struggle for existence that make a short visit so interesting to strangers. It is the fashion to speak of the Dutch as if they were anything rather than romantic. To our mind, their national history has been a sustained romance of the most sensational character, in which the famous war to the knife that shook them free of the Spanish yoke was merely an episode, and not the most remarkable. Ever since their savage ancestors, migrating westward, settled down in the swampy woodlands of Friesland and North Holland, they have been committed to a ceaseless struggle with the most formidable forces of nature. Heroically enduring and resolutely aggressive, they have hitherto had the best of it in their battle with the waters, although the storm-lashed ocean that assails them from without has found treacherous allies within their entrenchments. For the great rivers that drain the plains and mountains of Northern Europe come down in flood on the Dutch flats; and in the spring freshets that follow the breaking of the winter ice, they always threaten to burst their embankments. Frequently the water has had its way for the time, and it has kept its hold on some of the land it has conquered. Not so many centuries ago, although the precise date is uncertain, the sea burst through the northern breakwater. It has left the old land-line marked out by the chain of islands that stretches to Hanover eastward from the Texel, and has rolled the shallow Zuyder Zee over what was once an inhabited country. Nor was there any reason, according to all appearance, why a recurrence of similar disasters should not have drowned the rest of Holland. Much of the surface lies well below the sea-level, with no better natural protection than the barrier of shifting sand-heaps which is sometimes slightest and most vulnerable where the danger is most imminent. The

pressure is greatest on the western coast, where, after the prevalence of particular winds, stupendous masses of troubled water are thrown back on Holland from the narrows at Dover. But man has never relaxed in the work of entrenching and embanking; and now indefatigable industry is supplemented by the resources of science, and organized upon a system that experience has brought almost to perfection. Some of the great sea-dykes, such as those near the Helder and those others that protect the low-lying islands of Friesland, are triumphs of engineering as well as gigantic monuments of labour, while the works that bank in the dangerous flow of the lower Rhine scarcely yield to them in grandeur of execution. The Dutch, at the cost of an immense expenditure, have done nearly all that is to be done by man, and have fortified themselves pretty effectually at all points. Yet, to say nothing of the heavy insurance they have to pay on their lives and property in the shape of the annual outlay on these waterworks, it is nothing but habit and natural courage that can have enabled them to live with easy minds and go on labouring hopefully for the future. For there is little exaggeration in the saying, that the springing of a leak may sink a province; and although the sea has latterly been kept at arm's-length, yet the inundations of the rivers are periodically disastrous. You ought to have strong nerves to slumber tranquilly in stormy weather behind the great bulwarks of Kappel; but in the provinces of Gelderland and North Brabant many a man night after night must go to his bed in unpleasant uncertainty as to whether he may not be swept out of it before morning, to find himself adrift in an archipelago of ice-masses.

As the Dutch have made their country what it is, so the country has made the Dutch what they are. No wonder that men who, like their fathers before them, have been trained in such a school of self-reliance, should be good soldiers and good sailors, good traders, good farmers, and, above all, good patriots. They have learned to value the blessings they have to toil so hard for, and the country they have to hold by hard fighting. But as the climate is as ungenial as the soil is ungrateful unless it is assiduously kept in condition, they have to make the very most of the means at their disposal, and have naturally learned to practise frugality. Agriculture and dairy-farming alone could scarcely have covered the indispen-

sable expenses of keeping out the ocean, so the Dutch early betook themselves to commerce, to stave off the poverty that threatened them. Bred to maritime adventure off their own dangerous coasts, they carried discovery into every ocean. It would be unfair to say that their early merchants and navigators were stimulated solely by the hope of gain, otherwise they would never have risked lives and ships on their desperate exploring expeditions in frozen latitudes. But, as a rule, being a highly practical people, profit and adventure went hand in hand. With their national determination, they persevered in establishing trading relations where these were most likely to be most lucrative; they set down their foot on the rich Spice Islands, whose revenues have since been such a godsend to the State as well as individuals; they laid themselves out for trade-monopolies, to the exclusion of their rivals, as when they established their factories at Nagasaki in Japan. It must be owned that, in their trading, they often stooped, or even crawled, to conquer, as when the officials of these Japanese establishments consented to degrade themselves annually, in solemn ceremony, before the mikado, that they might retain his countenance by their abject submission. But although, like the Americans, they worshipped the almighty dollar, and are said, in their adoration of it, to have gone so far as to trample on the cross, yet, whatever we may think of their compliances, there can be no question of their courage. And however far-sighted their statesmen and chief burghers may have been, their seamen were by no means of imaginative temperaments, or apt to conjure up remote dangers. They fought their enemies, whoever these were and whenever they met them, without measuring the forces or the power they might provoke; but they fought them all the more fiercely beyond the line, that it was so far a cry to Europe from the Spice Islands and the Spanish main. It was but natural that men who had always been disputing their land to the ocean should be hard to conquer, and impossible to enslave. They held to their property—no men more so: drowning it on occasion did not seem to the Dutchmen such a very desperate resource, since they had familiar experience of inundations, when they had had no time to prepare for them. And the prospect of a terrible revenge sweetened the sacrifice, for no people could be more vindictively fierce when their passions were excited: witness their

treatment of De Witt and Olden Barneveld, and the bloody faction fights of the Hooks and the Kabbeljaws, of the Calvinists and the Arminians. Overtax them, oppress them, proscribe their religion, oppress their seamen and cripple their commerce — they felt they were being robbed of all that was worth the living for; their phlegmatic natures were slowly wrought up to a white heat, and were not to be cooled down again except by the satisfaction of victory and of vengeance fully gratified. Hence, as we have said, their war of independence with Philip and his captains was but a natural episode in the national history; nor, in saying so, do we forget the acts of almost unparalleled heroism which have been made so familiar in the pages of Motley, that it is quite superfluous to do more than advert to them.

But if the progress of scientific inventions has assisted the Dutch in some essential respects, in other ways it has handicapped them more heavily than before in the hot race with eager rivals. When the fleets of their Indian Company used to spend years on the Indian voyage, it mattered little whether they sailed from the Thames or the IJ: and if they chanced to be becalmed for weeks off the Texel, it scarcely troubled the worthy burghers who freighted them. When tedious coasting voyages were made under sail to the European ports, it was of comparatively little consequence that time should be wasted off the bar of the Maas or in tacking about among the shallows of the Zuyder Zee. The transferring the cargoes of those deep-laden ships that could not clear the bar of the Pampas had been submitted to as an inevitable necessity, or else the *kameeds* or lighters filled with water were secured and sunk on either side of them; then the water was pumped out, and as the emptied lighters rose, their buoyancy lifted the vessel between them. But the growth of the mercantile marine in other countries, improvements in ship-building, and, above all, the introduction of steam-power, changed all that. When vessels made swift voyages, sometimes several voyages in the year, time became of the utmost importance to those who were competing in the markets of the world. Could we imagine Amsterdam colonized by Spaniards or Italians, we may be sure it would have lost its trade as Venice did, and pined away in gradual decay, like one of those "dead cities" in northern Holland which we propose to visit with M. Havard by-and-by. Of all the great European seaports, no one per-

haps is less favourably situated. But the Dutchmen, habituated to get the better of difficulties, were the last people in the world to resign themselves to commercial extinction and straitened circumstances. Frugal as they are by habit and temperament, they have seldom come to shipwreck through penny wisdom. They began by cutting the great ship-canal which runs parallel to the two seas, from the IJ to the Helder, through the whole length of the province of North Holland. For a time that canal satisfied the expectations of its projectors, and paid the country handsomely though indirectly. But in time it became clear that it answered its purposes but imperfectly. It began to fill up in spite of dredging, and ships sitting deep in the water had to lighten themselves of part of their cargoes at the northern terminus of Nieuwe Diep. Then the prevalent winds which set from the west blew at right angles to the course of the canal. Before it had been decided on originally, an alternative scheme had been broached and rejected, on account of its greater costliness. Subsequently the rejected scheme was brought forward again, rapidly assumed a definite shape, and has resulted in the construction of the great North-Sea Canal.

The estimated expense was as serious a consideration as the engineering difficulties. But it was felt that the commercial existence of Amsterdam was at stake, and that the fate of the city depended on the success of the undertaking. Already the community of merchant princes and cosmopolitan bankers threatened to degenerate into so many speculators and stock-jobbers. So the capital of £2,600,000 was found, the State and the city coming to the assistance of the promoters, and the canal was cut. We had the good fortune to make one of the party when the board of directors made the trial trip from sea to sea; and although knowing little of technical engineering, we shall never forget the impression made on us by the ingenuity with which difficulties had been surmounted, and the stupendous character of the works at either end. It was a stormy day in the autumn; a formidable surf was rolling in from the North Sea; the Zuyder Zee was heaving in lines of crested breakers; even the inland waters through which the canal is carried were troubled, and dyed a lugubrious grey with the wash of the sand thrown up from the bottom. There was no difficulty in realizing the strain that would be put upon the works in the course of a rough winter.

But one had only to look at the triple locks of Schellingwoude on the east, at the locks and harbour of refuge on the North Sea, to be reassured. They were epics of triumphant labour embodied in massive masonry. Each of these stupendous blocks of stone had been hewn in Belgian or Norwegian quarries; each of the ponderous piles, carefully cased in its metal sheathing to protect it from injury from marine insects, had been cut in the forests of northern Europe. Since then the locks have been severely tried, but they have come successfully through the ordeal. Those at Schellingwoude are made free to all the world. As vessels of all burdens pass through them each day by the hundred, it may be understood what an impulse they must have given to the trade of Amsterdam; while in cutting another opening in their line of coast-defences, the Dutch have not only given a fresh challenge to the sea, but have snatched another victory from their enemy. The canal serves not merely as a great inland water highway, but as a mighty drain; and its expenses have been defrayed to a considerable extent by reclaiming the submerged lands that lie along it. Off Amsterdam ground for quays, warehouses, and graving-docks has been gained from the IJ, and the pile-founded city is not only protected by another line of stronger barriers, but has been sanguinely making extensive preparations for the revival of its old commercial prosperity.

There is enough of the romantic, as it seems to us, in all this to gratify the most ardently romantic of travellers, especially if he be somewhat sated with the picturesque in its more popular forms. But even the tame Dutch scenery wins on you insensibly; and, once fond of it, you never lose the attachment. In the sight of the limitless extent of meadow-land, cut up rectangularly at intervals by parallel ditches, grazed over by the drowsy herds of sleek black-and-white cows, and stretching away in the grey distance to a horizon vaguely indicated by the shadowy sails of innumerable windmills, there is something so original that you have no time to tire of it in an ordinary journey — say between the Hague and Amsterdam. The groups of cattle standing up to their hocks in the rank herbage, their well-favoured forms reflected in the pools as they lazily flick away the flies with their tails, are so many pieces by Cuyper or Paul Potter. When you do come upon a bit of copse-wood, or on a wind-blown, weather-beaten avenue of decently-grown timber near the Hague

perhaps, or in the environs of Haarlem, you appreciate it all the more that wood is so scarce. You make an expedition to the far-resounding sea — as at the favourite watering-place of Scheveningen, or at Katwyck, where the Rhine is lifted into the ocean by the aid of elaborate machinery, and the scene recalls to you at once the marine pieces by Van de Velde. There you are between the sea and the sand-hills. The breeze is catching up the sand in drifting clouds, and swirling it about you in such flying columns as are the terror of the traveller in the Asian deserts. The leaden-coloured scud drifts across a lowering sky, and everything above and below would be the abomination of bleak desolation but for here and there a blue rift overhead that lets in a stream of sunshine, for the chimneys of the snug fishers' cottages that are smoking to landward, and the flotilla of dingy-sailed fishing-boats that lies rocking on the swell in the offing. When you are staying in a town, you leave your hotel for a stroll; you wander along quays between the stationary and the amphibious population; you go tripping over the cables of ships and barges, unloading opposite their owners' residences, as they lie moored in wooded alleys under the shelter of umbrageous trees. You pass cellars and taverns, and look down the steps through the open doors at pictures such as Ostade and Teniers have familiarized you with. The "sonsy" maiden of the burgher class, in handsome but unassuming costume, framed in the lozenged lattice she is looking out of, might be a reproduction of a Terburg or a Gerard Douw. Turning a corner, with the echoing clamours of some noisy wharf still resounding in your ears, you stumble on some choice morsel of medieval domestic architecture, buttressed and turreted, with its receding angles and projecting windows, reflected in the placid surface of the water that may have stagnated from time immemorial against the weed-grown bricks. And beyond the *enceinte* of the city, but still entangled in its network of canals, your heart is gladdened by villas and cottages. Often, indeed, they are vulgar to villainy in their style, but the vulgarity is redeemed by the luxuriant brilliancy of the gardens, with their blooming parterres and cages of gay-plumaged tropical birds, and shrubs and hedges that thrive marvellously in the damp, although tortured and contorted into every fantastic device.

On the whole, the Dutch have been a wonderfully conservative people, in spite

of their long experiences of republican institutions, and their not unfrequent demonstrations against the aristocracy of birth and intellect. Few nations have changed so little in taste and character, in type of feature, and even in costume; and as it is with themselves, so it is with their country and their buildings. Go into the Trippenhuys at Amsterdam and study Van der Helst's great picture of the jovial arquebusers celebrating the conclusion of the peace of Westphalia. There are said to be five-and-twenty life-sized portraits in it, and you can easily believe it; for in the streets of the capital at the present day you may meet any number of men with a striking family resemblance to its heroes. You can see that the great artist has treated his subject with equal force and truth: He has permitted himself no idealistic vagaries, but has seized and stereotyped, with an admirable nicety of perception, the manifold shades of the various idiosyncrasies which all preserve a distinctly national character. For that great work of his is *the* national painting, *par excellence*. There are the representatives of those burgher worthies who thought, and toiled, and fought, playing out with patient courage a changing game, with the existence of their country for the stake, and the kings and great captains of Europe for partners and opponents. Broad, solid faces, bearing the traces of cares and anxious thought, are expanding into jovial hilarity; and for once, in the satisfaction of a common success, small civic differences are forgotten, and good-fellowship is in the ascendant. The hands in the painting, as has often been remarked, are to the full as characteristic as the heads: in spite of the rich ruffles here and there, you could never mistake them for the property of courtiers of Versailles or St. James', or even of patrician merchants of Venice or Genoa. They are Dutch all over — Dutch of the well-to-do burgher class, who have lived well and worked hard. The chamber is simple, as becomes the town-hall of an unpretending nation of citizens and graziers, who were found to regulate their life and conduct by the tenets of an austere religion. Yet their riches would scarcely be worth the having did they not occasionally parade the outward and visible signs of them. Carved wardrobes and richly-chased iron-bound chests, containing handsome jewels and raiment, have always been handed down as heirlooms, even in peasant households; and it is not on so triumphant an occasion as the present that the chief

magistrate of the wealthiest of the Dutch cities would be found wanting. Hence all that pomp and personal bravery — the ruffles, the rings, and the golden chains of office — the magnificent doublets, slashed in velvet and brocaded in gold. There are rich drinking-vessels, too; for solid plate as a sign of wealth in reserve is almost indispensable to good credit: besides, it is a mere locking-up of capital; for the precious metals will keep their value, although you may have to lie out of your interest on them. But the *menu* of the banquet is more substantial than refined: there are few of those *entrées* and *entremets* that would be served elsewhere in court rejoicings to tempt the sated palate. There are huge joints, in keeping with the massive beakers — joints that lay a good foundation for drinking and smoking, and to which active men of healthy appetite, celebrating a high occasion by some pardonable excess, might cut and come again.

If we leave the Amsterdam banquet-room — where perhaps we have already lingered too long — we shall find that the pictures in other styles are equally suggestive in the way of preparing us for a tour of Holland. Paul Potter's "Young Bull," with his slightly "raised" look, contrasting the placid rumination of the cow standing near him, may be met with any day now in any retired bit of meadow. Having found a strain of cattle that fatten and milk well in an existence that is necessarily amphibious, the Dutch seem to have made no attempt to change the breed by the importation of foreigners, who might take less kindly to the climate. It is true the milk is rather watery than creamy, but that is to be expected; and then, as the diluted fluid is given in abundance, there is always a market for the surplus stock with those English dairymen who desire to defraud their customers conscientiously. And the man looking over the fence in Potter's picture is as true to existing nature as the fence itself or the cattle, Rembrandt, Hals, and a host of imitators, with their wonderful power of managing colour, multiply figures and faces that you recognize everywhere as familiar acquaintances. Buildings such as you may still see, with their long narrow windows and their high-pitched roofs are thrown in to form the backgrounds. Ruysdael and his inferiors are fertile in "bits" where the dense masses of deep green vegetation draw extraordinary vigour from the rains and the fogs; or else they give their talents scope on the broad meadows,

scattered over with herds of cattle, and dotted with windmills. Ostade and Teniers, combining episodes as they are wont to do, give you in a single tavern-scene a comprehensive epitome of village existence. You may see much the same sort of thing now as you saunter down any village street of a holiday. The same scrupulous cleanliness is preserved amid all the confusion of the revel—there is the same display of delft on the shelves over the highly-polished tables and clean-scoured dressers—the same vulgar expansiveness and Jordaens-like merriment—the same snatches of song and rough love-making, and of course the same haze of tobacco-smoke. As likely as not, the village fiddler still sits perched upon a barrel in the corner, with a jug at his elbow to grease his arm; or, if the weather admits of it, the tables are put out under some spreading tree, while the primitive waggons have pulled up hard by, and the horses, nibbling contentedly in their nose-bags, stand patiently waiting the pleasure of “the boors drinking.” As there is no fighting to be done at home nowadays, you no longer come upon those picturesque groups of cavaliers that Cuyt and Wou-vernans delighted in—the dismounted riders in plumed hats and scarved corselets—the grey or chestnut chargers richly caparisoned. The uniforms of the modern Dutch service are decidedly more serviceable than attractive. But the grey and chestnut hacks are still much as they used to be—as are the famous draught-horses of Friesland and Gelderland. They lay on flesh very kindly; they tend rather to bone than blood; and you see few signs of their ever having been crossed with the more fiery strains of Arabia and Barbary.

Thanks to one thing or another,—to their temperament, to their climate, to their having located themselves in an out-of-the-way corner of Europe,—the Dutch have changed but little, unless when change has been indispensable to their well-being. No doubt they have been kept moving by the irresistible forces of civilization, competition, and invention; and sometimes, being far-sighted men of business, they have even anticipated the pressure. And the consequence is that, proving the truth of the Italian proverb, *Chi va piano va sano*, they have seldom knowingly missed a chance, and notwithstanding the heavy disadvantages that have weighed them, have made very steady progress in prosperity. Luck has stood their friend more than once, and especially in their colonial affairs. First,

they made themselves masters of the Spice Islands. Then they lost them, after having been forced to throw in their lot with Napoleon; and it was only owing to English generosity or indifference that they were re-established in the occupation of these rich possessions. Rich as those possessions were, however, bad management was ruining them, and at one time it threatened to become a serious question for the State whether it might not be prudent to abandon them altogether. At that critical moment the government found a man who undertook to *exploiter* the resources of Java, so that they should again yield an ample revenue. We do not mean to discuss or defend the morality of the arbitrary policy by which General Van der Bosch created a variety of lucrative monopolies, and practically confiscated the property and persons of the natives for the benefit of their European masters. It is certain that he not only relieved the home treasury from grave embarrassment, and provided it with the capital necessary for works that were becoming indispensable in Holland, but he revived and developed the profitable trade which has been pouring a stream of riches into the mother country. Hitherto good luck has been aiding industry, and there can be no question that the fortunes of Holland, being bound up with the colonial empire she may possibly be deprived of, are resting on foundations at least as precarious as the mud-driven piles that support Amsterdam. So far, however, she has only had reason to congratulate herself. Out of all her trials she has emerged victoriously; intervals of dulness, depression, and servitude have only nerved her to new exertions, which have invariably been followed by fresh advances; and so far as the conduct of her citizens is concerned, there is nothing in her past history that need inspire apprehensions for the future. Nor does she readily admit that she entertains any. The citizens of Amsterdam, like the rich man in the parable, have been pulling down their warehouses that they may build greater, and have been busying themselves, as we have said, over new docks and harbours to receive the affluence of shipping which is to crowd into their port.

These rosy-coloured dreams may all come true, and when a cautious man backs his prognostications with heavy investment of his cherished capital, there is strong *prima facie* reason for believing that he is very likely to be in the right. But the romance of Holland has by no means ended happily, so far as it has gone, for each

of the districts of the United Provinces. If the country has done well on the whole, and looks forward to the future with well-founded confidence, certain parts of it have experienced sad vicissitudes, and must resign themselves to living in the past and in the memory of vanished glories. Amsterdam and Rotterdam, in the pride of their wealth and reinvigorated energy, may find melancholy warnings in the history of decaying neighbours, as to the uncertainty of human affairs. One evening we were seated in the Palace of Industry in the former city—a great crystal-roofed building resembling in some respects the Alhambra in Leicester Square—where you may indulge in refreshments while listening to music. Among the adornments of the hall were a display of scutcheons, each of them bearing a municipal coat of arms, and being surmounted by the name of the city that carried it. There were Rotterdam, Haarlem, Leyden, Utrecht, Delft, etc.—populous towns on paying lines of railway, and long familiar for their associations with some remunerative commodity, such as tulips or learning, velvets or pottery. But interspersed through these there were other names—Enkhuizen, Medemblik, Hoorn, Kempen, Monnikendam—which awakened only some faint geographical and historical memories. One was sorely puzzled to remember in some cases what and where one had heard of them; in others, where they were situated. Yet every one of these places had once had a history, though now they have almost dropped out of the recollection of their nearest neighbours, unless on the occasion of a contested election, or when it is a question of making up so many national decorations. These and others are the decaying cities that lie round the margin of the Zuyder Zee, left for the most part half stranded by its receding waters, or silted up by its advancing sands. In their day they had sent out their fleets of trading-ships to the Indies in place of a few miserable fishing-boats; and repeatedly they had changed their merchantmen into war-galleys, fighting out some bitter local feud among themselves, or taking their part in the struggle of the Provinces against invaders from Spain or England. The more reduced they were now, it was plain that they must be the better worth visiting for those who appreciate the picturesqueness of decay. And as none of them had come to a violent end, as their populations had been imperceptibly diminished and impoverished, and as the inhabitants had had ample time to reconcile

themselves to oblivion and extinction, there was nothing in the nature of their misfortunes to shock the most sensitive nature, while time might be trusted to have dealt gently with the monuments of their more glorious past. Reading these names, then, and ruminating over the appropriate memories, it struck us that we could scarcely do better than explore the shores of the Zuyder Zee. But it was then late in the year, and we knew something of the difficulties and disagreeables of travelling in bad weather in northern Holland, away from the beaten tracks. So we put off our project to a more convenient season, which, we are sorry to say, has never as yet come to us. In the mean time, however, a French gentleman, an artist, has done what we have delayed to do; and M. Henri Havard has published the account of his experiences in a small illustrated volume entitled, "*La Hollande Pittoresque, Voyage aux Villes Mortes du Zuiderzée.*"

M. Havard sets out by telling us that there is no more interesting voyage to be made in Europe, as there is none that has been more rarely undertaken. For that there is very satisfactory reason. There are no regular communications between the decaying cities either by land or water, and, as it may be imagined, the accommodation they offer is worse than indifferent even for visitors who are by no means fastidious about their quarters. In the absence of public conveyances, M. Havard's obvious alternative was to charter a coasting craft of light draught, as most of the towns in question are more or less accessible by water. Even that, however, was not so easily done. It appears that the Dutch coasting skippers are bound to register themselves, not only as hailing from certain ports, but as plying on certain boats; and if they desire to infringe on the letter of their engagement, they have to find security for new certificates. The consequence is, that each man is only acquainted with his own especial portion of the coast, and the sea is not to be navigated safely unless by those who have a tolerable knowledge of it. Great part of the Zuyder Zee is a labyrinth of submerged banks intersected by crooked navigable channels. Between the island of Marken and the mainland for instance, we are informed that the depth varies from four feet to two. All difficulties, however, were finally overcome by M. Havard. He and his Dutch companion—a descendant, possibly, of the famous navigator, Von Heemskirk—were fortu-

nate in making the acquaintance of an austere but comparatively adventurous mariner, owner of a *tjalk* of sixty tons. Captain Sluring knew as much of the Zuyder Zee as most men, and was willing to risk himself to a certain extent in exploring. But he stipulated that he should never have to sail of a Sunday, or when he did not like the look of the weather. That second condition shows the risks that seafaring men must run in these inland waters, for Sluring did not lack courage; and another of the preliminary arrangements of the party was equally suggestive in a different way. They had to arrange the means of storing a great provision of good drinking-water, for in all the districts they intended to visit, the water was so brackish as to be "detestable in taste, and prejudicial to the health of those who are unaccustomed to it;" which goes to confirm our assertion, that the Dutch are excusable if they indulge somewhat freely in gin.

The voyage began with a disembarkation on the isle of Marken. Many ordinary tourists must have sighted it, yet the inhabitants live in almost perpetual isolation. They expect to be swamped every winter, and take their precautions accordingly. Groups of the houses are clustered on the top of artificial mounds, where the people take refuge, with all their portable property, during the annual inundations. At these times communication between the hamlets can only be kept up by boat. Live stock they have none, although the island is all in pasture, except a cow or two to prove the rule, and a few disconsolate sheep. They cut their grass to sell on the mainland, living chiefly by their hay and their fishing. When they die, they are "flitted," as we should say in Scotland, to the top of one of the other mounds, more strongly bastioned than the rest, and bearing the name of the *kerkhof*. Of course there is neither wood nor stone in the island, so that their houses are built entirely of imported timber; and in the event of a fire breaking out, it generally spreads to a conflagration. Considering how often the Markeners are washed out or burned out, it is strange that the little island should boast some very remarkable collections of old specimens of domestic art. In more than one of the cottages, to say nothing of quaint delft ware and Japanese porcelain, of venerable glass and wonderful metal-work, M. Havard found a half-dozen of venerable *armoires* of beautiful workmanship, admirably preserved. It shows that there is no village in Holland

so remote that the good housewives do not indulge their pet vanity of acquisition, accumulating treasures in a state-chamber, which they only open at intervals to provoke the envy of their neighbours.

Opposite to Marken lies Monnikendam, characteristically named after its founders, and the first works they undertook. In the thirteenth century or earlier, the monks in the northern German convents used occasionally to throw off swarms like bees, sending out their surplus population like the Scandinavian vikings, although the adventures they went in quest of were spiritual. It was a wandering band of the kind that set up the first tabernacles in Marken, and made a settlement on the coast opposite. The arm of the sea that lay between the two monasteries naturally took the name of the Monnikenmeer; and the monks in the mainland having begun by damming, their settlement was naturally christened the monks' dam. Monnikendam is now a place of as much consequence as some of its more northerly neighbours; yet in the days when it had its share of foreign trade, it must have supported a far larger population than at present. Now it would seem, from M. Havard's description, that the people are nodding over their milk-pails, feeling they have nothing particular to do, between the hours when the cows must be attended to, when once the cheese-presses have done their work for the day. The streets and places were grass-grown and deserted; there were few barges to stir the duck-weed on the canals; and the arrival of the little vessel that brought the strangers would have created a sensation, had there been inhabitants enough abroad for a sensation to spread among. As it was, when, in the way of business, they called on a "tinman" some ten minutes after setting foot on shore, they found that the news of their arrival had reached him already by some mysterious means. Yet these drowsy Monnikendammers, phlegmatic as they seem, are not without a sense of poetry. The monks' sea was a poetic appellation enough for the channel between Marken and the mainland; but in modern times it has been rechristened as the "Sea of Gold," which strikes us as a singularly graceful way of paying a tribute of gratitude to the richness of the bottom over which it rolls. The neighbouring dairy-farmers dredge up the sandy mud and spread it as manure over their water-meadows, which are renowned for magnificent pasturage. The next town to Monnikendam is no other than Edam,

which has long been advertising its cheeses over great part of Europe. You may see its produce piled like cannon-shot at the doors of provision-dealers from the Shetlands to Sicily, and from the Irish Channel to the Baltic. "Edam" may not have the delicate creaminess of Stilton or Canrobert, or the full-flavoured richness of the Roquefort, that weds itself so naturally with the bouquet of Burgundy, when served up on vine-leaves; but it has a charm of its own coming into a Dutch picture, with the warm scarlet orange of its rind, and the bright golden-yellow of its interior; and as it can be indulged in to any extent by robust digestions, it has all honour paid it in its native country, where vigorous appetites are the rule. Mrs. Micawber remarked that the heel of a Dutch cheese was not adapted to the wants of an infant family; but we suspect if Mrs. Micawber had known more of Holland, she would have found "Edam" a common article of consumption amongst the Dutch children of tender years. At all events, adults devour it in season and out of season. One of your earliest impressions of Holland is the singularity of seeing great slices of cheese served up at breakfast as a matter of course. Considering that cheese-making has always been one of the staple industries of this part of the province of North Holland, and that the land, to say the least of it, supports as many animals as ever it did, it seems almost unaccountable that the population of Edam should have dwindled, in the course of a couple of centuries, to a fifth of its former twenty-five thousand.

It is easier to explain the decadence of Hoorn. Hoorn, like Edam, still lives by its cheese, and does even a larger business in that article, as M. Havard informs us. There is a market held every Thursday, when loaded waggons roll in under the ancient gateways and over the creaking drawbridges; when the farmers drive up the high street in primitive vehicles, covered with quaint carvings and flaunting in paint; and when each consignment of the dairies is duly carried to the town-scales and weighed by officials in the mediæval garb of coats of white and caps of colour. But whereas Edam has to be approached by canals, Hoorn lies actually on the sea, and had once a large commerce. It is true that nowadays its harbour is like a patent rat-trap, and it is much more easy to get in than to get out. The outer sluices can only be opened when the water is at a certain level, and the sluices may be sealed hermetically in

the course of prolonged bad weather. But once its double harbour, such as it was, used to be filled with tiers of shipping; its hardy seamen were brimful of dash and patriotism, and took as kindly to fighting as to peaceful trade. It sent a formidable contingent to the flying squadrons with which De Ruyter used to sweep the Northern Sea in the scandalous days of the degenerate Stuarts. When he moored his fleet in the Medway, and the sound of his cannonade was heard in the city of London, many of his vessels hailed from Hoorn. One of its gates displays a memorial of these glorious days in the shape of an English coat of arms, in staring colours that are carefully renewed. The legend runs that a couple of negroes from Hoorn, on board one of the admiral's ships, carried off the original of the escutcheon from a vessel lying in the Thames. And the Hoorn people have another trophy to show, in remembrance of another honourable exploit. For they played so conspicuous a part on the day of the great sea-fight, when De Bossu's Spanish armada was shattered in the Zuyder Zee, that they had assigned to them in their share of the spoil the drinking-cup of the captured admiral. Enkhuizen treasures his sword, and Monnikendam his collar of the Golden Fleece. Nor was Hoorn less distinguished in the way of maritime discovery. Tasman sailed from there to discover New Zealand and Tasmania; so did Jan Pietersz Koen, who laid the foundation of his country's colonial prosperity in the South Seas; and Schouter, who was the first to double Tierra del Fuego, the southern extremity of the New World, and who gave the name of his native town to the terrible cape of clouds and storms. Though no longer rich or commercially prosperous, M. Havard found Hoorn still tolerably well-to-do, and, considering the circumstances of the climate, preserving a wonderful air of gaiety. To say nothing of its picturesque ancient gateways, which are somewhat melancholy reminders of departed greatness, the old houses get themselves up as freshly as ever. With scarcely an exception, they have all been *maisons de luxe*, with pointed roofs and staircase gables, with salient reliefs of grey granite, throwing out the warm colours of their brick façades, and richly decorated with carvings in stone as well as in wood. Hoorn, in short, although it stands among rain and fogs, is apparently one of the most coquettish little towns in the world. As M. Havard observes, it seems

as if the only appropriate costume in it were the plumed hat, the jack-boots, and the rapier that we meet with in the portraits of Rubens and Van der Helst.

Enkhuizen, at one time even more prosperous than Hoorn, has now only half Hoorn's population. Its sixty thousand inhabitants have come down to five thousand, and in its harbours, which are said to have once sent out one thousand vessels, there are fewer skiffs than are owned by the fishermen of Marken. And there is one peculiarity about its desolation. There are cities in the neighbouring Low Countries that have seen sad changes—Bruges and Ypres, for example. But Bruges and Ypres, like Hoorn, still cover very much their old extent of ground, though blocks and single houses have dropped out here and there, and although apartments go begging in the dwellings that remain. In Enkhuizen it is very different. A part of the old city is left in decay, but as for the rest, it has disappeared altogether as if its foundations had been razed and the ground swept clean. Long-abandoned sites, like Nineveh and Babylon, are still marked by artificial mounds bestrewn with fragments of brick and pottery. More than half of Enkhuizen is now a verdant meadow, although, if you dig deep beneath the surface, you will find traces in abundance of its departed life. Far away in the quiet of the country, strolling through the fields, M. Havard came upon a solitary gate that once gave access to the city on that side. What stifled the enterprise of Enkhuizen was the silting-up of its harbour: now it has fallen back on the manufacture of the buoys which are so much in demand on the shoals and banks that have been the ruin of it and other localities. But even in its depression and poverty it still finds money to spare for those benevolent objects to which the Dutch subscribe so generously. No city in Europe is more amply provided with charitable institutions than their capital of Amsterdam, and here at Enkhuizen there is an admirably conducted orphan asylum, dating from the more prosperous years of the city in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

But as each of these dying towns very much resembles another, it is not our purpose to follow M. Havard in his leisurely circumnavigation of the Zuyder Zee. We have borrowed nearly enough from him to indicate the changes that time and circumstances have brought about in the different provinces of a country that is

generally prosperous, and to show that the parts that are the least visited by travellers are very far from being the least interesting. There is Medemblik, once the chief town of West Friesland, with a mint of its own, magnificent basins, spacious quays, and the finest shipbuilding-yards in the whole of Holland. These are all to be seen still, but there is scarcely a sign of life stirring in them. There are only three thousand souls left in the place, and they move about it like spectres gliding round a graveyard. Their sole means of communicating with the outer world are by a single small diligence, which crawls periodically to Hoorn. Harlingen, on the other hand, which lies on the opposite shore of the sea, has rallied again, and is become the great outlet for the cattle, the cheeses, the eggs, and the vegetables which are shipped from Friesland for the English markets. But at Hindelopen, which boasts an antiquity of some thousand years or more, the harbours have filled up, like those of Enkhuizen, till you must pole the boat along among the rank growth of matted weeds that makes the port resemble a polder. Stavoren used to make treaties of its own with foreign nations, and is said at one time to have held the third place in the Hanseatic League. Now Stavoren has dwindled to some hundred houses, half of them falling into ruins; and it has hardly five times as many inhabitants. Kampen was made a city of the empire when Maximilian met the diet at Worms. Its citizens had protected themselves and their wealth with walls and towers, and deep fosses that were flooded from the Yssel. It still shows signs of healthy life, though its streets are ill-paved and many of its houses out of repair; but in spite of the vulgarity of reviving prosperity, M. Havard found it as well worth visiting as any of its neighbours, for its inhabitants have been careful to preserve the monuments of its earlier splendour. They have levelled their walls to let in light and air, but they have laid out the site in gardens and turned their city ditches into stretches of ornamental water. There are plate, paintings, and wood sculptures to be seen in the Stadhuis and elsewhere; there are books in the town library; there are the remains of a number of monastic institutions, for Kampen was Catholic and munificent: above all, some superb gates are left standing, and set off by the trees, shrubs, and flowers that have been planted around them. Then there is Harderwyk, a little town, a sort of Chatham

or Cherbourg in miniature, reclaimed like an oasis from the surrounding desert where the sand has gained the upper hand. Strange to say, for Holland, there is little water, except what comes from rain or inundation: the slightest breeze drifts the loose sand over the barren heaths, which are only browsed by some half-starved sheep. But Harderwyk itself and its immediate neighbourhood have been made tolerably habitable by human industry. Its streets and barracks show a military smartness, for it is the great depot whence the recruits are despatched to fill the ranks of the colonial army. It owed its origin to one of those calamities that have destroyed so much property in Holland. The surrounding country was once as fertile as any other part of Gelderland; but in the thirteenth century it was submerged. A handful of shepherds, flying for their lives, took refuge on the highest of the sand-hills, and the collection of huts they established grew into the town of Harderwyk — "the refuge of the shepherds." Though it now smells of pipeclay, and the gown has given place to the uniform, yet its earlier fortunes are associated with learning, and three or four hundred stranger students are said to have attended the famous schools, which educated among others Boerhaave and Linnæus.

We have said nothing of the Helder and Nieuwe Diep, and the stupendous embankments to be seen in their neighbourhood; nor of cities situated somewhat inland, like Leeuwarden, Zwolle, or Amersfoort. Paying a visit to these is merely a question of taking a railway-ticket. But the islands that still act in some measure as a breakwater to shelter the Zuyder Zee from the full force of the North Sea rollers are only to be brought within reach of the traveller if he goes cruising on his own account like M. Havard. The Texel, to be sure, can be reached by chartering a skiff at Nieuwe Diep, and it is better worth an expedition than any of the rest of the group. It is at once the most exposed and by far the richest and most populous. The Texel mutton is as celebrated as the "*pré salé*" of the French salt marshes, and for the same reason. The pasturage is seasoned with the brine that comes drifting in on the spray from the ocean. But if they can breed sheep of the finest quality, the inhabitants have to pay for it in embankment works and anxiety. To quote Andrew Marvel, the ocean is always threatening to play at leap-frog over their

steeples as it has often played before. At intervals the island has been washed almost clean: so late as 1825, it was nearly drowned, and for some time it was very doubtful whether it would ever get its head above water again. Vlieland and Terschelling are so bleak and barren, that man has very much abandoned them to nature. But if it is likely that the sea may some day engulf the Texel, Ameland in a very short time will be again united to the mainland. Dykes and breakwater have been judiciously disposed with that idea, and the water is gradually throwing up an isthmus which will soon turn the island into a peninsula. That line of islands survived the great inundation because, low as they are, they stand comparatively high, and although their soil is sand it is relatively firm. But the little isles of Urk and Schokland that lie well into the Zuyder Zee, off the curve of coast between Stavoren and Kampen, appear only to have been kept in existence by something like a series of miracles. The former has a thriving fishing population of about twelve hundred souls, who, if it were not for the force of habit and the indifference bred by familiarity with danger, must feel very like so many castaways adrift on a frail raft that at any moment may go to pieces beneath them. But as for Schokland, life there becomes too precarious even for amphibious Dutchmen. The island has taken its name from the shocks it constantly receives from the ocean; the people have been gradually leaving it like the rats in a sinking ship; and we are told that the few families who cling to it from affection are fully aware they are tempting providence, and have quite made up their minds to the worst.

We have necessarily done but imperfect justice to M. Havard's most interesting book, and may consequently have conveyed an imperfect idea of the attractions of a summer cruise in those Dutch inland waters. But we have heard of nothing so near home that is likely to be so fruitful of fresh enjoyment, for if Holland generally is too much neglected, these decaying cities have been well-nigh forgotten.

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THE DILEMMA.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE appointments made provisionally by Kirke to his regiment, of the officers

selected from the residency garrison, were all confirmed in due course at headquarters; and when it joined the force assembled in the field, Yorke found himself gazetted adjutant, Braddon being second in command, while Egan and Cowper were attached to do duty. Thus the opportunity had come to Yorke so often longed for, and in a form which his most sanguine day-dreams had failed to picture. An adjutant of irregular cavalry, in the thick of active service, what better place could a young officer find in the whole army?

The scorching heat and blinding dust of the hot season were now succeeded by the rains, and although still very hot, the weather was bearable enough for men who did their work on horseback, and the change from their previous confinement to the freedom of an open-air life in the saddle, combined with the confidence inspired by success to send up their spirits; and the officers of Kirke's horse marched into camp at the head of their five hundred gallant troopers all in a state of the highest enthusiasm. Kirke was deservedly complimented by the general in command on the good form into which he had already brought his levy, the timely arrival of which and its soldier-like appearance procured for it a hearty greeting from all ranks of the little army which it had come to reinforce. There was plenty for it to do; for although the camp was stationary—the little English force standing at bay awaiting reinforcements, itself on the defensive though professing to carry on a siege—the cavalry were in constant movement to protect the flanks and rear of the camp, continually threatened by the enemy. Thus Kirke's horse from the very first came almost daily into contact with the enemy; and although the spirit and natural quality of the men were excellent, there was need for caution and judgment as well as courage in handling these young soldiers, for the mutineers were both better mounted and better trained. But Kirke was just the man for the occasion. A good swordsman and rider, and perfectly fearless, he was cool and wary also, and by keeping his men well in hand at first, and only engaging when he could do so at advantage, he saved his young troopers from sustaining any serious check at the outset, and every day saw an improved discipline grafted on the natural fine bearing of the men, and increase of mutual confidence between them and their officers. The regiment, however, being very much broken up into detachments,

good officers were as necessary as a good commandant to bring it into shape; and Kirke had made a happy selection in the men he chose. Braddon, although still disposed to be cynical, had shaken off his moroseness and the bad habit which had caused his former downfall. The cloud which had overshadowed him had passed away, his gallant bearing at the residency having gained him a new reputation, and he came out now in his proper colours as the good officer and genial comrade, cool and clever as Kirke himself; and he soon gained the respect and confidence of the men, like all Indians readily disposed to hero-worship. Egan, too, now that he had some fitting occupation, had shaken off the betting-ring manners which he had been wont to affect, and there remained plenty to admire in the little fellow's courage, good riding, and endurance. The very model of a light cavalry soldier, and never so much at ease as when in the saddle, he was able to tire down even Kirke himself, who was said to be one of the toughest men in the army. Cowper, like Yorke, was eager to distinguish himself, and Yorke, although nominally adjutant, could not be spared for camp work, but was as much on outpost duty as any one. Thus handled, Kirke's horse came well out of all the numerous skirmishes in which it was engaged, either collectively or in detachments; and success begat the confidence which is the first element of superiority in war. The officers were seldom together; but occasionally the whole regiment would be united in camp for a brief space, when the officers joined together for their frugal meals in what was called the mess-tent, off such food as was procurable. But if the diet was simple, it was seasoned with high spirits. There was always plenty to tell each other on such occasions, and the little party felt like a band of brothers; for Kirke, although a hard man, was both good-tempered and good-natured, and was perfectly free and unaffected off duty. Mackenzie Maxwell made up the complement of officers. In ordinary course a young assistant surgeon would have been attached to an irregular cavalry regiment, but those were not days of routine; Maxwell preferred active life in the field to remaining at the Mustaphabad residency, and asked to be allowed to remain with Kirke's horse, and all the officers treated the older man with a respect which made his position sufficiently agreeable.

During this time the field forces to which the regiment was attached had, as

we have mentioned, been compelled to remain stationary, encamped before a great rebellious city, and itself the assailed rather than the assailant; but at last the little army had accomplished the task it had been set to do, after a struggle the brunt of which was borne by the other branches of the service, and the time now came for a move onwards, with diminished numbers indeed, but of men who had achieved a victory against desperate odds, and looked on the work remaining to be done as a light thing after that which had been accomplished. Notwithstanding the harassing duty which had been required of it, Kirke had drilled his regiment on every opportunity, and when the time came for moving on, the men were not only adepts at outpost duty, but tolerably well trained to move together, while the officers had been able to get proper mounts and accoutrements, for sales were of almost daily occurrence in camp. Some wounded men were left behind with Cowper, who was disabled by a fall of his horse, but many recruits had joined; and the regiment marched at the head of the advance, over five hundred sabres, fairly well mounted and equipped, and ready for anything. The damp heat of the rainy season was now giving way before the first approach of the cold weather, the morning air was fresh and cool, the sky was clear, the earth was covered with a mantle of fresh green crops; and as Yorke rode over the boundless plains clad in all the charms of the early Indian winter, his heart bounded within him for joy. He had never felt so happy before. Campaigning seemed the perfection of life. This was no mere political quarrel, when men might deplore the necessity for shedding blood, and feel no rancour against the enemies whose lives they were seeking. The business in hand caused no regrets or mistrust whether the end justified the means; it was to subdue a cruel enemy and revenge bitter wrongs; while, mingled with other feelings, there was the satisfaction of knowing that the result of the war was no longer doubtful. The tide had been stemmed, and final success was plainly in view. Spirits ran high in camp, and nowhere higher than in Kirke's horse. The men had been frequently engaged, and with small loss, than which nothing more begets confidence in troops. But in Yorke's heart there was also a feeling of tumultuous joy as it confessed to hopes that the love still so deep and ardent might now be rewarded hereafter. Olivia must know, he thought to

himself ever and again, that I worship the very ground she treads on. True, she does not love me yet, although I am sure of her regard; she would not be the Olivia of my adoration if she could be so soon untrue to the memory of her husband. But so brief a wedded life needs not a prolonged widowhood. Falkland must be to her rather a noble memory to be remembered with veneration than a lover to be passionately cherished. Surely the deepest chords in her heart have never yet been stirred; I have gained her respect and regard, I may yet gain her love. And the thought that she was no longer beyond his reach filled the young man's heart with wild ecstasy. And yet, he continued to himself, what meanness in me to be thus rejoicing in that noble man's death! But no, I don't rejoice in it. While he lived there was not one disloyal thought about either of them in my mind. But it is our fate that she should be free again; mine be now the task to prove worthy of her: and as these thoughts passed through the young man's mind, he pressed his charger till the gallant Selim bounded under him as if responsive to the rider's feelings, and the orderly who followed him as he galloped along, carrying orders across the plain, had much ado to keep up to his proper distance in rear.

The amount of actual fighting which the cavalry of an army goes through, as compared with the business in that line which falls to the infantry, is usually but trifling, and its losses small in proportion. But the rule did not hold on this occasion. Almost all the cavalry of the Indian army having mutinied, the great advantage possessed by the enemy in this respect over the raw levies raised to replace them, gave them a confidence at first which was wanting in contests between the infantry. The nature of the country, too, a vast plain on a dead level, bare of obstacles, favoured the movement of cavalry; and frequent encounters and skirmishes took place on the front and flanks of the advancing British column, amounting sometimes to regular stand-up fights. In this war the experience of such work which men could hardly gain in a lifetime of ordinary campaigns, was crowded into a few months; and the troopers who fought their way through it were veterans at the end. Nevertheless Kirke and his officers escaped unhurt for a long time; yet the fighting was sometimes sharp enough. As, for example, one afternoon the advancing column, marching along the main road with Kirke's horse in front, came to a

village surrounded by a grove of trees, to clear which the cavalry on the flanks had to diverge somewhat to the right and left. Braddon, with a squadron, was on the right front; Egan with another on the left front; Kirke led the way along the road with the advance-guard of the third squadron, Yorke riding beside him. The enemy's cavalry had been showing in the front all day, but always retiring at a respectful distance without opposition, while the squadrons thrown out in advance on the flanks kept the front of the main column clear. Here, however, owing to groves and gardens coming in the way of the flankers, and obliging them to make a long detour, the column on the road got to be somewhat in advance, and, as the leading horsemen turned round a bend in the road through the village, a body of rebel cavalry could be seen drawn up not fifty yards in front, which, instead of retreating, moved down on them at a trot. The leading detachment, of six men only, were cut down, and the enemy came bearing down, somewhat thrown out of order in overcoming this first obstacle, but still a compact body filling up the road and open space up to the line of village huts on each side, with a front of some sixteen files. They had evidently got it in them to strike a blow.

With Kirke and Yorke were the support, of ten men riding two deep, and at some little distance behind came the rest of the squadron.

Kirke had but a moment for decision. To have fallen back on the main body was to cause panic and rout. His resolution was taken in an instant. There was not even time to form the party into single file, so, drawing his sword he waved it on high, and, shouting "Charge!" dashed forward at a gallop, and the little party of twelve were upon the enemy almost in an instant. The latter slackened speed instinctively, but the opposing sides came together so quickly that the two officers had passed the enemy's leading files before they were pulled up, in the midst of a mass of horsemen jammed close together. A strange position truly, after following your enemy for days at the distance of a mile or so, to find yourself in his midst, knee pressing against knee, and to feel his hot breath against your cheek: seconds at such times seem like hours, and yet the whole scene passes like a sudden dream. Yorke had no time to think of method, or to recall the lessons he had taught himself to practise in his mind for use in such emergencies. Instinct, for

the moment, took the place of method. There is no time to speak; the only sounds are the scuffling of men and tramping of horses, as the riders try to get their sword-arms free, and cuts and parries are exchanged with desperate speed. Yet, amid the hurry, Yorke has time to feel with a sense of satisfaction that he is not flurried, and that his head is cool, as, seizing the man on his left by the collar, he pulls him from his saddle with a sudden jerk, and the man falling down amongst the horses, gives a cry of anguish as he is trampled upon below. Kirke, for his part, was too close to the men right and left of him to hit them effectually, but swinging round he cut down the man whom he passed on the right, after which he had enough to do for an instant to parry his two nearest assailants, whose short curved scimitars were more handy at these close quarters than his long sword. But Kirke at last ran one of them through, and Yorke stunned the rider on his right by a blow delivered close to the hilt of his sword. So close was the crowd, that as these men sank down there was no room for them to fall between the horses to the ground; the head of one rested on Yorke's knee, and, for the instant, the riderless horses interposed between the combatants. But the leading files of the enemy, on the right and left of the road, who had no one opposed to them, were now closing round, and the little party must soon be overwhelmed if help comes not. But help was nigh. The native officer with the third squadron, on seeing what had happened in front, delayed only long enough to extend his front to the width of the ground, and galloped up in support. Then the roadway was filled with a seething mass of horsemen, whereof only those leading on each side could engage, and they were jammed up by those pressing on from behind. A few more seconds pass—slowly, as it seems, so many blows are crowded into them—and then there is a yielding of the rebel cavalry; the whole mass seems moving slowly in one way. For, by this time, the outer squadrons under Braddon and Egan, working round the village, descried the enemy massed on the road between them, and press forward to attack them, separated, however, by the mud wall of a garden which borders the road for some quarter of a mile along either side. But the enemy, thus caught between the two lines, are bewildered, and the rearmost men begin to tail off, and ride out of the way along the road; the impulse is communi-

cated to those in advance, and soon there are left only a few facing Kirke's men, who in their efforts to turn and get away are all cut down. But the victorious party are too broken up to pursue them far, and the enemy gets off with a loss of about thirty killed, and nearly as many horses captured, while of Kirke's horse eight are killed, including the advance-guard which was surprised, and sixteen wounded, some slightly. "A sharp thing while it lasted," said Kirke to his subaltern, wiping his long sword, "and might have been awkward if Subahdar Tej Singh had not been up to time. All's well that ends well; but this will be a lesson to you for all your life, young man, to take care how you march round a corner."

On another day, Kirke's regiment, in advance of a detached column moving across country, had made out the enemy occupying a line of villages in strength, and apparently intending to await an attack in the position. The officer commanding the force on coming up determined to make a flank movement to turn the position, and accordingly diverged the main column to the right, leaving Kirke's horse still in front to occupy the enemy's attention and cover the manœuvre. It was a clear bright morning of the cold season, and every object could be distinguished plainly in the still, clear air. In front were the low mud walls of a couple of villages, about half a mile apart from each other, and connected by a grove of well-grown trees. Between Kirke's men and this position, more than a mile distant, was a perfectly open plain, green with young corn, and unbroken by a single obstacle; the view was bounded on the right and left by the still unreaped crops of the previous wet season, as high as a horseman's head.

Kirke, with his orderly and trumpeter behind him, advanced over the plain, reconnoitring, a little distance ahead of his regiment, which moved at a walk in column of squadrons at deploying distance. They had arrived pretty near to the line of villages, when fire was suddenly opened by a battery which had been concealed in the grove. The practice was bad, but Kirke ordered the regiment to retire; and it fell back, deployed in line so as to offer a smaller obstacle to the artillery-fire. On seeing this, a large body of the rebel cavalry emerged from the grove and formed up in front of it. The effect of this movement was to stop the fire from the guns, as the new-comers were in the way. They too deployed into line, which somewhat

overlapped Kirke's force, and they moved forward as if intending to attack.

"Now look out," said Kirke jocosely to his orderly, in Hindustani; "we may get a chance."

Kirke continued to retire the regiment, the enemy's cavalry following. He even gave the word to trot. The rebel cavalry began to trot too, halting, however, when Kirke halted, and advancing whenever he retired.

In this way the two bodies of horse moved across the plain till they had got to be a full mile from the enemy's main position. The rebel cavalry meanwhile were getting nearer to Kirke's men, coming so close that their faces could be distinguished, and it looked as if, were a determined rush made, Kirke and his attendants would be cut down before the regiment could turn to help them. And the rebels, seeing that the retreat continued, began to grow excited. Shouts were raised, and swords waved. Some of them broke their ranks and began curvetting about in front of their line, abusing the Feringhee runaways.

"It's about time now," said Kirke to himself, drawing his sword. Then he gave the order, and his trumpeter sounded the halt, and then immediately afterwards, as the regiment turned to its front, the canter; and putting himself at their head, he led the way towards the enemy.

The enemy's line continued to move on at a slow trot, and the interval between the two was rapidly diminishing; but a spectator looking merely at the British line might have thought he was viewing a parade exercise, so cool and leisurely did the advance appear. Kirke, in front of the centre on Kathleen, with drab felt turban-covered helmet and tunic and breeches, and high boots of untanned leather, riding with stirrups somewhat short, and a strong seat, erect, his long straight sword held upright, a sinister smile on his dark resolute face. In front of the right squadron comes Braddon, tall and heavy, under whom even the big steed he bestrides seems undersized, a powerful Australian recaptured during the campaign, which perhaps erst bore some portly civilian in more peaceful times. Before the centre squadron rides Egan, dapper and light, horse and man seeming as one. Yorke leads the left squadron, spare and lithe, and with an easy seat, riding Selim with a light hand, the little horse bounding along with the short springy action of the Arab, like a mad thing, as if panting for the fray.

When barely fifty paces remain, Kirke's

trumpeter sounds the charge, and the whole regiment echo the shout which their leader gives, as, waving his sword, he lets Kathleen go. Some of the enemy, pressing forward, respond to the challenge, but some halt, some turn round—their line is broken and their chance gone. It is no fight, but a running pursuit. The bravest, who stop to fight, fall first, overmatched and outnumbered. Those save themselves who fly first, as the two bodies gallop together helter-skelter across the plain. The rebel horsemen parry and cut backwards; but the game goes against those who fight an enemy behind, and many a one rolls from his saddle under the pursuers' sharp sabres. Not until the battle has rolled on to within less than a furlong from the enemy's position does Kirke sound the halt, and the pursued are able to disengage themselves and take refuge in the grove. Then Kirke re-forms his men and retires, not too soon, for the enemy's artillery after a pause begins to open fire, although the plain is covered with the bodies of their comrades. But the fire is scarcely opened when it stops again, for the enemy's attention is now diverted by the movement of the troops threatening their flanks; a panic seizes them, and they limber up and retire, and Kirke and his men remain in possession of the field, sprinkled with the bodies of fallen men and riderless horses.

Some of these bodies move, and one man, disengaging himself from his horse, is seen walking leisurely towards the grove, in full face of the regiment, now drawn up in order.

Kirke looks at his orderly, giving a little jerk of his hand towards the rebel trooper, and the orderly taking the hint, gallops after him. The man hears the sound of his pursuer's horse, and, looking round for an instant, sets off at a run. He is not far from the grove, and will find shelter there; but he cannot run fast in his heavy boots, and the horseman soon overtakes him. Once or twice he tries to evade his fate by doubling, but presently the trooper gets him within reach of his tulwar, and there is a laugh among the onlookers as the man falls under the blow, while his pursuer dismounts to rifle the body, for the soldiers of both sides usually carry their wealth about them, and a score or so of rupees may often reward the victor in single combat.

"Our fellows will expect to get any loot that is to be had," said Kirke, riding up to Egan. "Leave ten files of your squadron; and see that everything is brought in to be

shared equally amongst the whole. And mind," he added, as Egan turned round to give the order, "we don't want to be bothered with any wounded prisoners." Then the regiment passed on at speed to join the field force, whilst the detachment moved about the field engaged on their office, looking after their fallen comrades among other things, and catching loose horses. Two of the regiment only were found to be killed; fifteen had been dismounted; about twice as many altogether were wounded or bruised by falls. More than eighty bodies of the enemy were counted. Many of these were of men wounded, cut down, or ridden over and trampled down; and some of them lay as dead when the fatigue-party came up. But the pretence was of course seen through; a carbine-shot or slice of the tulwar settled the affair; and when the detachment passed on to join the regiment, nothing stirred on the plain to resist the wild dogs and jackals when they should arrive for their banquet in the evening. An hour later the camp-followers would come up, and the dead be stripped of what clothing remained to them. Perhaps hereafter the mothers and wives in some distant villages would wonder why their sons and husbands did not come home, and would be fain to console themselves with the reflection that they must have fallen in a good cause. For, strange as it may seem, it was not the English only who deemed themselves to have the right in this quarrel. To many of these benighted creatures it seemed to be quite a noble thing to stand by their comrades, and strike a blow to avert the pollution which they believed their crafty Feringhee rulers to be preparing for them.

"This is the neatest job we have done during the war," said Kirke, as, an hour or two later, the little group of officers lay resting under a tree at their ease, waiting for the late breakfast which the servants, who had come up with the mule bearing the mess-equipment, were busy preparing, the regiment being now encamped for the day, and pickets duly posted. "It is not often one gets a chance to have three squadrons all going to work together, and over such splendid ground too."

"And yet," said Braddon, "although perhaps one ought not to say so, those men were better fellows than ours, if the truth must be confessed—better mounted, better riders, better trained. If their leaders were worth anything, they might have shown us a thing or two. But the scamps have no heart for their work."

They are ashamed of themselves, to begin with, and all at cross-purposes. I suspect that they only keep together now because they don't know what else to do."

"Yes," observes Kirke, "it will take all of a year to bring the regiment up to the mark of one of the best of the old irregular corps; but the lads take to the business very kindly, don't they? But here is breakfast ready at last."

"It can't be more ready than I am," responded Braddon; "this 'pursuing practice' is the very deuce for giving a fellow an appetite."

CHAPTER XXXV.

ABOUT this time the *Gazette* arrived from England, containing the first Mutiny brevet. Kirke was made a major; while Braddon was made both major and C.B. for his gallant share in the defence of the residency. Kirke, although he might naturally have felt annoyed at his junior being more distinguished than himself, took the matter on the whole very well. He was a hard man, but jealousy was not a part of his character. Yorke being still a subaltern, although now nearly at the top of the list, was not yet eligible for brevet promotion. It was in this brevet that Dumble, as already mentioned, was made a brevet-colonel and C.B. Braddon was good-humouredly satirical about the value of a reward which embraced Dumble, but the profession of indifference to distinction was not carried very far; with the rise in public estimation his self-respect had returned, and his moroseness disappeared, and he was now as blithe and gay as any one in the regiment. As for Yorke, he did not want reward or promotion to maintain his spirits; indeed, to belong to Kirke's horse was in itself a sufficient passport to consideration throughout the camp of the main army, which the regiment had now joined. One regiment of British cavalry was also, like themselves, a corps of veterans, who had been in the thick of the fighting; but to the officers and men of the dragoons lately arrived as reinforcements from Europe, and who had not yet had an opportunity of crossing swords with an enemy, the famous corps which had already been mentioned over and over again in despatches, and whose exploits were in everybody's mouth, was naturally an object of curiosity and respect; nor could Yorke help contrasting the sort of reception he now received whenever his duties brought him in contact with the officers of other branches of the serv-

ice, with the obscurity of his position a few months ago.

Then, too, as the avenging army swept the country clear of wandering rebel hordes, the post was re-established, and English letters began to reach the camp, so long cut off from news of the distant West. Yorke's letters, like those of many of his comrades, were written in the strain which the times made natural, full of rejoicings that those so dear to the writers had been spared thus far, full of anxieties for the dangers still to be undergone. As Yorke's sister, who was his chief English correspondent, expressed it, life in England at this time was one of continued suspense. "Indeed," said the fair writer, "I sometimes feel as if the strain was more than could be borne, as we have to wait from day to day for more tidings from India. But as Mr. Morgan always says [Mr. Morgan was the new incumbent of a chapel-of-ease at Wiltonbury], everything is ordered for the best, and this must be our precious consolation whatever befalls those dear to us. The Mills's cousin, whom of course you know, as he is in the army, has just sent them tidings of his safety. All the officers of his regiment were treacherously murdered, but he was away on leave at the time, and so was preserved. Truly, as Mr. Morgan says, there is a special providence which guards over us in all our dangers. And you, my dearest Arthur, how mercifully have you been saved almost out of the lion's mouth! The papers are quite full of Captain Kirke's heroic deliverance of your garrison just as you were at the point of destruction; and everybody has been reading Colonel's Dumble's beautiful affecting despatch; no wonder the garrison fought bravely with such a noble commander as he must be: still our hearts are strained almost to bursting when we think that you are still set in the midst of so many and great dangers; but should my dearest Arthur be spared to receive these fond lines, I know that we shall have his sympathy in our dreadful anxiety."

In these days of irregular posts, it often happened that more than one mail arrived at the same time, and in fact Yorke received by this same post another letter from his sister—for his mother was not a good correspondent—written a month later than the first, expressed much in the same terms as the other in the beginning, but containing also a piece of news at the end which could not be withheld. Her dearest Arthur's affectionate heart would

be made glad on hearing that his fond sister was about to become the wife of the new incumbent of St. Clement's. With so estimable a man for husband, to say nothing of his being so brilliant a preacher, she felt sure that her happiness was secured. Mr. Morgan was a widower, the letter went on to say; "indeed he has been sorely tried, poor dear fellow, for his first wife died after a long and very painful illness; but I trust he has now many years of happiness before him." The letter concluded by saying that the marriage was to take place in a few weeks. The writer would have wished to defer it till her dearest Arthur should be at home; but she supposed he could not be spared from his military duties just at present, and dear William had made such a point of the new vicarage being now ready for occupation, that she was forced to consent to a speedy union.

The tide of war had now completely turned. It was no longer a struggle on terms of equality, where discipline and courage on one side were balanced against numbers on the other. The British army was now in great strength, and moving triumphantly over the country. The rebel cavalry had pretty well given up fighting on its own account, and the opportunities for engaging it had become rare; but the enemy still held out in force here and there, occupying strong positions from which they had to be dislodged; and the British cavalry, moving in advance of the army, more than once suffered losses from artillery and infantry fire, to which they were unable to reply. This happened one day to Kirke's horse, now brigaded with two other regiments under Colonel Tartar, and in advance of the army moving on a point where the enemy seemed disposed to make a stand. Kirke's horse was drawn up in reserve while one of the other regiments was skirmishing in their front among some high crops, in which the horsemen were almost concealed, and which surrounded a flat-roofed town hardly to be made out above the tall grain, but from the outskirts of which a desultory fire was proceeding. The younger troops, who had never been in action before, were in a state of great excitement, as a squadron told off for skirmishing was engaged in front soon to be reinforced by another—Kirke's men meanwhile, who were in the rear, conducting themselves with the *nonchalance* of old campaigners, the men dismounted, the officers in a little group on horseback.

"They seem very lively in front there," said Kirke, as the dragoons might be seen trotting round in circles discharging their carbines in reply to the enemy's fire; "but I should doubt anything coming out of the business, except that some of the youngsters will get hit. I wonder the brigadier don't send us up instead. Not that we should be able to do much better, but our men would be cheaper."

"It would be an awful nuisance though," said Egan, "to have a lot of our fellows knocked over for nothing, merely because the general wants us cavalry to do infantry work. A regiment of Sikhs would clear out these fields in a jiffy."

"My good fellow," observed Braddon, "if you deduct all the men who are knocked over in war without satisfying any useful purpose, the casualties in this noble pastime would undergo a perceptible reduction."

"May be so, but it must be a horrid bore to be hit about in this way without getting any good by it."

"But you may get a great deal of good by it, my dear fellow; there, for example, goes a man who will get a good deal,"—and as Braddon spoke, a doolee was borne to the rear with an officer, whom they could make out to be the commandant of the regiment engaged, wounded in the leg by a gunshot: "that man arrived from England about three days ago, and has been in action about five minutes, but he is safe for his C.B. now, and will be a great authority on cavalry for the remainder of his life."

"Ah! here are the infantry at last," said Kirke, as a regiment of Sikhs came up in haste at a long swinging stride, and sent a couple of companies in skirmishing order into the high crops.

"Now, there goes a really brave man," said Braddon, pointing to the commandant of the regiment, a stout, middle-aged officer, who rode at the head of it. "That man has a wife and eight children in England to my knowledge. I declare I don't think I could muster up courage to go into action if I had such a frightful load on my shoulders."

"I don't see that at all," said Yorke; "if a man has all the comfort of married life in peace time he must pay for it on active service. You can't have everything without alloy in this world. But I don't observe that married men make a bit worse soldiers than bachelors."

"Then they ought to. As for comfort, I don't fancy old Swaby there has had too much in that line; he has been always

dreadfully hard up, but it has been luxury compared to what is in store for his family if he comes to grief. I fancy I can see them, settled in some small country town, a picture of old Swaby in full uniform the only ornament left remaining, and the poor mother telling the children what a splendid soldier their father was (which won't put food into their little bellies however), and besieging the court of directors continually for an appointment for her eldest boy. No, if I were a married man I should be an awful coward."

Yorke laughed as Braddon finished his outburst, knowing that his friend could afford to play with the subject of bravery; but he could not help thinking that although the hope of winning the fair prize now before him was a source of strength and courage at present, what a hard wrench it would be to leave her side to go campaigning again, although he felt sure enough that, once in the field, a wife at home would make no difference in his conduct any more than it would in that of Braddon or any other soldier. But these reflections were interrupted by an order to mount. The infantry were now coming up in force, and advancing to the attack of the enemy's position, and Kirke's horse were ordered off to the right to guard the flank.

Passing through a grove of trees, the regiment came on to a piece of barren ground, some half a mile wide, and extending right up to the town, the left end of which was from this point clearly exposed to view, a wall surrounding the flat-roofed houses and huts within; while still further to the left could be made out a considerable body of the enemy, both horse and foot. It was to guard against any counter-attempt from this force that Kirke's horse had been detached to the right, while the main attack was made in front under cover of the high crops.

flechten und weben himmlische Rosen ins irdische Leben ;"

(Honour to women ! To them it is given
To garland the earth with the roses of heaven ;)

and in a key of fervent exhortation, he proceeds to contrast in changing metre, and terms certainly *not* advantageous to the "superior," the characteristics of the two sexes.

By the "superior" we of course mean the stronger sex: the *style esclave* still obtain in Germany. No John S. Mill has as yet arisen with quixotic enthusiasm on the social horizon of Teutonia, nor has, so far, the voice of the emancipated been heard in the fatherland.

It has somewhere been rashly asserted by some one, that every woman not born an Englishwoman, could she have had a choice in the matter, would have chosen to be so born. No greater error could be made as regards the German woman. She, taking her all round, is absolutely contented with her lot, and supremely disregarding of the estate of other women. The day of small things not only suffices for her, but is to her as a crown of glory; she despises the frivolity of the French, the freedom of the English, the fearless strides and absolute independence of the American woman. Do not believe that you will be able to sit long in the seat of the scornful: you will have to come down and go out, for towering high above you, on her pedestal of homebaked virtues, and looking down upon your ornamentalness and uselessness with the fear and dislike virtue assumes in gazing upon vice, stands the traditional *Hausfrau*. That she should have anything to learn of her neighbours (outside the fatherland) is impossible; there is only one country in the world, and that is Germany; there is only one woman and that is the German woman. In the face of such convictions as these, it would be daring to hint at the state of mind that has been characterized as a mean satisfaction with a mean position. The "coming" woman, as yet, casts no shadow across the dead level of German home life. The "platform woman" and the "medical woman" are still only known by evil report; beings that cause the virtuous matron to draw her imaginary skirts shudderingly around her ample form, and to pass by, with mentally averted eyes, on the other side.

When, in Germany, the (so-called) chivalry of the Middle Ages fell dead, and the romantic period came to a timely end, woman seems to have disappeared into indefi-

From Fraser's Magazine.

GERMAN HOME LIFE.*

BY A LADY.

VII.

WOMEN.

"*Ehret die Frauen*," says Schiller in one of his best-known poems: "*Sie*

* [The publication of these papers—which another chapter will conclude—has been interrupted by illness.]

nite drudgery, whence she only emerges to bewilder us by her paradoxical position during the Goethe-Schiller period. The intellectual resurrection of the fatherland, the age of philosophy and letters, the Weimar-Athen's epoch, when a grand spiritual revolution shook old prejudices and false tastes to their rotten foundations, presents a picture full of intense interest to the student of human nature. After years of silence and obscurity, woman comes again to the front; yet truth obliges us to confess, in no very elevated guise. Artificiality was banished from society; nature now was to have her rights; paint and powder, ruffles and *talons rouges*, were deposed; and in the place of French audacity, wit, and sprightliness we have classic robes, fillet-bound heads, melancholy, moonshine, and sentiment. All social conventionalities are upset and defied. Men and women change partners as in a quadrille; a continual *chasses-croises* confuses society. "There is hardly a woman in Weimar," writes Schiller to Körner, "but has a *liaison*. They are all coquettes; one may easily fall in with an affair of the heart, though it will not last any time." Extravagant worship of the purely intellectual, on the one hand, and a throwing off with undisguised contempt the old traditional restraints of life on the other, mark the most brilliant period of German history. A glorification of personal freedom is the gospel of the new school, whereof the highest doctrine seems to be that every man shall do what is good in his own eyes, since his appetites, passions, and desires are sacred emanations from a Superior Being implanted in his breast only to be gratified. Selfish sentimentality, hysteric weepings over the dullness and indifference of mankind, rhapsody, melting of sympathetic souls, romantic meetings, absence of all firm purpose or high-strung resolve, elective affinities, bathos and suicide, mark the epoch of the rehabilitation of woman in Germany.

As we gaze round on the Weimar group, we are puzzled. We see Jean Paul with his *Titanide*, Charlotte von Kalb, a big, flighty, foolish woman, tumbling, morally and physically, any way (the lawful husband philosophically indifferent to the eccentricities of his half-mad, slatternly spouse), disputing the possession of Richter's Platonic soul with the sentimental Emilia von Berlepsch, also "a married lady;" and in the dim background languishes, somewhat obscurely, a Madame de Krüdener (not the author of "*Valé-*

rie" be it observed), and yet another sympathetic being, nameless to posterity. It is true the "only one" (*der Einzige*) is a little shocked by the fall from the empyrean of one "dear angel," and a little trammelled by the exactions of the other, but his purer spirit at length finds the repose it seeks in the haven of matrimony. We see the great Goethe, after endless "love-affairs," not too great to form a *liaison* with Frau von Stein (Herr von Stein quite agreeable to the arrangement), of whom it must be said that she turned out a considerable thorn in the majestic poet's flesh. A sentimental and bellettristic correspondence flourishes during a decade, long before the end of which, we read between the lines that Goethe is heartily sick of his exacting charmer. They quarrel—as all lovers in all times have done, and will do—and the disputes are generally made up by presents of sausages, fruit, or cakes from the high-tempered lady. Goethe goes after strange goddesses; and the rupture is complete when he "declines on the lower range of feeling" of a Christiana Vulpius. We see the calm Schiller puzzled as to which he ought to love best, his wife, or her sister Charlotte von Lengefeld; and an uncomfortable suggestion presents itself to the mind that he may have married the wrong lady. We are almost tempted to think that the correct Körner had a *tendre* for his sister-in-law, the artist, Dorothea Stock, whose lover, Huber, ran away with another man's wife, said man uttering pious aspirations for the happiness of the interesting couple, and imploring Heaven to bless their union. We see young Jerusalem dying of Wertherism; Von Kleist shooting himself with his "friend" Sophia Vogel, "*am heiligen See*," near Potsdam, and Charlotte Stieglitz trying to rouse her husband, a confirmed hypochondriac, by stabbing herself to the heart before his eyes with a dagger. Not the least part of the strange picture lies in the fact that the exceptional women ("They are all coquettes," says Schiller) of blameless lives and decent conduct mix freely with their more elastic sisters, and seem definitively, and of conviction, to have adopted the axiom, that all lapses from virtue are to be regarded with the strictest toleration.

Amidst all these ecstasies and fervours, simmerings and sighings, we turn with a feeling of relief to the wholesome typical figure of Werther's Charlotte, and admire the exquisite calmness with which she, having seen

His body borne before her on a shutter,
Like a well-conducted person
Went on cutting bread and butter.

She, after all, though the others be the representative men and women of an epoch, is the typical German woman; true through all time; and she has gone on cutting bread and butter ever since. In fact, for decent German women there seems, by universal consent, to be no other career; and when we consider that the world is full of exorbitant persons who clamour three times a day for food, let us give all honour to the bread-and-butter cutters of life.

But in the rebound from artificiality, the then polite world fell into such extremes of genteel sensibility that no one dared to be truly natural. The ambition to shine, if not by talents, then by singularity; if not by beauty, then by extravagance of opinion; if not by rank, then by recklessness; destroyed the very simplicity that the enthusiasts had originally taken for their text, and "the modesty of nature," overstepped, became unnatural.

Nevertheless, we must remember that this is the period to which every German man and woman turns with pride and pleasure; it is the moment of time when woman emerges from the obscurity and drudgery of the dark ages, and becomes a personage and a power. The lives at which we have briefly glanced are not the lives of obscure, little-regarded persons; they are those of the representative men and women of the times, who gave the tone to society and to literature; not hidden, shamefacedly, under deprecatory bushels, but set up high on the altars of enthusiasm and hero-worship. These men are their greatest: these women their highest and brightest: these philosophies and poesies and moralities, their supremest, sublimest, best. It is their *ne plus ultra* of all that culture and development can produce. Like the age of Pericles, an age to be cited by admiring worlds for all after times, with proud pointings of the finger to the unapproachable group, and triumphant upward glances of unspeakable adoration.

This is what German men and women get out of it. To outsiders this affectation of nature is the most offensive form of the artificial. The French *marquise*, chattering shallow philosophies, could at least amuse you by her wit, if you refused to be bewildered by her beauty; but these votaresses of "nature" bore you to death with their dull loves and high-flown correspondence; the talk is so tall, the out-

come so small; the sentimentality is so heavy, flat, stale, and unprofitable, that you turn from these *femmes incomprises*, these tender transparent souls, and feel in your heart that perhaps worse things than epigrammatic immoralities, paint, and patches have happened to you.

The ideal woman of Germany is still much what Schiller painted her; she poses in passionless serenity (as you may see on the title-pages of the poetry-books), surrounded by sister-souls, and crowned with stars. She is a soft sentimental creature, all sensibility and adjectives, weaving "heavenly roses" into this earthly life; sighing softly to the stars, wandering in moonlight, culling forget-me-nots and pansies, and enwreathing her blonde brows with the flowers of the feelings; melancholy, sympathetic, *schwärmerisch*; blue-eyed and pensive; swimming, somewhat vaguely, in vast seas of sentiment, not far from dangerous gulfs of bathos. The Egeria of some favoured Numa, the "heavenly friend" of a semi-Platonic lover; vaporous, floating somewhere, like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth, ready to dissolve at the touch of this gross workaday world, and so pass away in a state of elemental purity to more sympathetic regions.

There is no figure more poetic than that of the ideal German woman; there is no actuality more prosaic than the flesh-and-blood reality, as she lives and moves and has her being. The ideal woman is always unmarried; the real woman is married. If marriage be the prose of life, German marriage is of prose, prosiest. "*Mit dem Gürtel, mit dem Schleier,*" says Schiller, with the gentle cynicism of his cold, calm nature, "*reißt der schöne Wahn entzwei!*" With the loosened cestus and the lost veil, the sweet madness is also lost. He knew best. The finding is not one to gratify the weaker sex generally, but no German woman has been found to resent the poet's utterance. They thenceforth, if goddesses at all, are household goddesses; their pedestal, if pedestal be still possible, is set upon the great Teutonic tripod — the home-baked, the home-brewed, the home-spun. Marthas henceforth, cumbered about with too much serving (consider only those clamourings for food at which we have already glanced), to have time for aught else. It seems to be an accepted dogma that a man is a man whether he be bachelor or benedick; whereas a woman may only be properly so called when she has fulfilled her destiny as wife and mother.

Short of that she is an incomplete unit; and, whatever other "mission" she may have fulfilled, that which nature originally intended for her remains unaccomplished. Under the heading of "Marriage," woman in her fullest development shall be dealt with; for the present we can only contemplate her as she walks "in maiden meditation fancy free."

The girl is, however, mother to the woman; and if, in the majority of cases, the woman be only the greater child, a glance backwards from effect to cause will go far towards explaining this feminine phenomenon. We have seen what the ideal German woman is, and the young lady tries to copy her. She piques herself upon her "sensibility," and is proud of her "*Empfindlichkeit*," a quality which often has the root quite as much in "tetchiness" and temper as in tenderness. She is easily offended, easily discouraged, easily thrown off her balance. The feminine virtues of patience and submission become, by exaggeration, vices of helplessness and indecision; she is kept in a state of such tutelage and irresponsibility as can scarcely fail to make her troublesome at a crisis and useless in an emergency. Clinging and clamouring have come to be looked upon as somewhat obstructive attributes, and the parasitical virtues are, generally, rather at a discount amongst us; but this is not so in Germany, where negative acquiescence ranks higher in women than positive affirmation, where their poets paint them helpless and their husbands like them subjugated.

When the writer of these pages first went to Germany, it was with the expectation of finding in every tenth woman an uncrowned Corinna, and in every twentieth a silent Sappho: silent only in the sense, be it observed, of the poet's "mute inglorious Milton." Even at the capitol Corinnas were not; and Sappho was conspicuously absent "without leave."

Now, in Germany learning is the characteristic honour of the nation; and it is the proud boast, and the just one, too, of German women, that they alone, of all the modern feminities of the earth, are absolutely well educated. The same professors that lecture to their brothers and cousins within the university halls and college class-rooms come down from those greater altitudes to teach the children and young girls in their day-schools. They are taught regularly, systematically, patiently, lovingly. A German girl must be dull indeed who is not well-read. Everything is taught, and everything is taught

well. But, after all, a building is not made of brick only, nor a ship of mere wood; and there are a score of diverse influences and social conditions working on the outer and inner systems of female education in Germany quite beyond the reach of any professor however eminent, or any pedagogues however profound.

Besides education, there is such a thing as self-education. A woman may be very well up to the general mark, nay, high above it in all matters of ordinary education; yet, if she strive not to teach herself somewhat of those things that make life lovely, she will learn before long that all her knowledge is but as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, and that the wisdom of her professors has been spent on her in vain. In the moral and social education of a German girl, even in her physical education, precisely the contrary doctrine prevails. She is taught that to be womanly she must be helpless, to be feminine she must be feeble, to endear herself she must be dependent, to charm she must cling. She is not brought up to be, she does not desire to be, the companion, the comrade, the equal, in "all that not hurts distinctive womanhood," of the men around her. She is thrown back upon herself and other women for society and amusements; a life that revolves in a narrow circumscribed round of inanities is considered good enough for her. To be herself, is to be nothing—less, worse than nothing. To be as like everybody else as she can; to copy her friend's clothes, phraseology, and manners; to worship the platitudes of precedent, to conform to the dead level that custom has prescribed, to keep carefully to the sheep-walk, to applaud in concert and condemn in chorus, is the only behaviour that can be tolerated. If she does these things she fulfils all the law and the prophets, and it shall be well with her; but if she do them not, she will be viewed askance by her sisters, eyed with dislike and suspicion; it will be whispered that she is a *Blaustrumpf*, or a *Freigeist*; it will be proclaimed that she is a *Pietistinn*, or an *emanzipirtes Frauentzimmer*; she will be stigmatized as *ueberspannt*, revolutionary, dangerous, objectionable.

Allowances are made by these gentle ladies for the eccentricities of French, English, and American women, on account of the unfortunate accident of their birth; but they are inexorable towards one of their own circle who would dare to assert any originality of character, or independence of action. Woe would cer-

tainly betide the folly of that virgin who would venture to shake off the "wounding cords that bind and strain," and make an existence for herself independent of the cackling of the *Kaffees* and the weariness of infinite boredom based upon everlasting babble. Visions of charming German women I have known rise up and look up at me with blue pathetic eyes. They are the exceptional women, the women least loved by their fellows — disturbing, uncomfortable souls, bringing constraint and *gêne* in their train. The utterances of such women, though modest enough, are out of key with the Philistine chorus (shall we say the *vox Dei*?) in the background. And, after all, it is by these, not by the vague, exalted, heroic figures, that the sorry action of the play is helped forward, and the platform chiefly occupied. They have one bugbear and one object of idolatry, these monotonous ladies; a fetish which they worship under the name of *mode*; a monster between public opinion and Mrs. Grundy. To say that a thing "is not *mode* here" is to condemn it as if by all the laws of Media and Persia. It is not her centre, but the system of her social education, that renders the German woman so hopelessly provincial. Recent great events might have led us to expect greater results in this direction. The last advices from Berlin show that petty personal spites, small envyings, backbitings, and jealousies are as rife in the imperial city as in the much-despised little *Residenz* towns. Nor can any change for the better be hoped until men and women are allowed, or will allow themselves and each other, to mix on terms of greater personal equality and dignity.

Let us look back at the physical conditions of the young girl's life. We have seen her sitting *hinter Ofen*, living in a dry overheated atmosphere, nibbling at unwholesome nicknacks, pecking at her food, and poisoning herself with sweets and sours. A girl is seldom sent to school away from home, by reason of the extra expense of board and lodging. Every one who has lived in Germany must remember with pleasure the gangs of fresh round child-faces passing through the streets during early morning hours. All these little students carry neat knapsacks containing books, slates, etc., strapped on their backs, and the pavements and the promenades are made merry with their chatter. *Jahre in jahraus* they go, growing less round and less rosy as time passes on, until early maiden-

hood is reached. On holidays the children meet together and play; there seems no idea that these little brothers and sisters should suffice for each other, with the occasional excitement of "a party." Boys and girls do not play together as our boys and girls do; even at a very early age, strictest division of the sexes obtains; were boys allowed to burst in upon the confabulations and titterings of these little misses, and loudly proclaim their scorn (as English youth is apt to do) of "girls' nonsense," it might be better, eventually, for all parties.

As the little girl grows older, she has her coffee-parties like her elders, and makes a vast number of acquaintances of her own age, so that society forms a large ingredient of juvenile life. All the little sayings and doings, envyings and uncharitablenesses, are repeated day after day; the little spites and jealousies are kept up through a long course of years, and the daily gossip becomes almost a necessity of life. There is no "coming home for the holidays." The children are *at home*; they have only more time for the discussion of the quarrels and friendships that have rejoiced or offended them during the "half-year;" more coffee-drinking, more gossip, and more liberty.

The child buds into early maidenhood, and then this passing to and fro through the streets, where she knows every one, and is known to all, begins to have its disadvantages. She becomes self-conscious, has a bowing acquaintance with her friends' brothers, who meet her by chance (or otherwise) on their way to or from school and college. A system of coquetry is now inaugurated, which is not without its influence on her character. Hitherto she has had coffee and gossip; but now a fresh stimulant comes to her life; she has something to conceal; her eyes become less candid, and her gaze is not so fearless as it was. Here again, not the girl, but the system, is to be blamed. The sort of frank "flirtation," beginning openly in fun and ending in amusement, which is common amongst healthy high-spirited boys and girls in England, and has no latent element of intrigue or vanity in it, but is born of exuberant animal spirits, youthful frolics, and healthy pastimes shared together, is forbidden to her, and these tacit arrangements are made and enjoyed after the surreptitious manner of stolen fruit.

Quite young German children are extremely deft with their fingers, and it is surprising to see what charming specimens

of their handiwork these little maidens offer at birthday shrines or on Christmas-trees. It would be well that English governesses and schoolmistresses followed the example of German ladies who undertake the education of girls in this most essential part of a gentlewoman's education; for the most part it is totally neglected in our better-class schools, and the present rage for art-needlework has nothing to do with the prosaic essential acquaintance that every lady should have with the darning-needle and the cutting-out scissors. As a German girl approaches the completion of her education, her studies are somewhat relaxed, and she profits by the time thus gained to attend once or twice a week at a *Nähschule*, where well-brought-up ladies will give her a course of lessons on cutting-out, fixing, piecing, patching, and darning, as well as in every possible and impossible sort of ornamental stitchery. She will make her brother a set of shirts, and for herself a complete outfit against the day when she emerges from schoolgirlhood into young-ladyism.

The rite of confirmation now comes. In Protestant Germany it means nothing of the religious enthusiasm, the ardent aspiration, the passionate resolves that often mark the epoch in the minds of our young people. There is nothing of "recollection" or piety about the rite. It simply means, to those whom it most concerns, a long dress, visiting-cards, a bouquet, a lace-frilled pocket-handkerchief, the "*Du*" of childhood exchanged for the "*Sie*" of young-ladyhood, and the potential *Schlafrock* and *Morgenhaube* for early hours. Visitors pour in to offer congratulations and presents; cake and wine and bustle pervade the domestic atmosphere; a droschky is hired, and the confirmed young Christian is driven out to pay visits and show off her finery.

German girls have no out-door amusements, if we except skating when the winter proves favourable. Boating, riding, archery, swimming, croquet,—all the active, healthy, out-door life which English maidens are allowed to share and to enjoy with their brothers, is unknown to them. There may be several horses in the stable (as is not unfrequently the case where there are cavalry brothers), yet no one dreams of training any of them to carry a lady. Such diversions are looked upon by the girls themselves as bold, coarse, and unfeminine. Country walks, thick boots, and water-proof clothes are out of the programme, nor could you convince

them that a good gallop in the open, or a long stretch over the common, would morally and physically be much better for them, more wholesome and commendable, than the close unhealthy atmosphere of coffee-gossip. It is in vain that you tell them such exercises, far from unsexing them, fit them all the better for the duties of their sex; it is difficult for them to hear you out and not show the scorn they entertain for you.

For much that affects the lives of German women we must, however, look at the conditions of existence generally. In England, where the villages are closely dotted about, where noblemen's seats, manor-houses, the luxurious villas of retired bankers and merchants and lawyers stand thick and threefold, where the social position of the clergy is a recognized one, country life takes an idyllic turn that the pencil of Leech will hand down to posterity. The girls in these families are all about equally cultured and well-mannered; they feel no shyness when asked to the big entertainments that the duke gives to his country neighbours; they are not overcome with embarrassment if the sons of the house let the light of their lordly countenances shine upon them; very often the rector's daughter is a far more elegant woman than Lady Dorothy or Lady Elizabeth! The schoolfellows of these young ladies, though not the cream of the cream, are of good position, with brothers in all the professions—at the bar, in the army, in India, in the colonies, in merchants' and bankers' and lawyers' offices; there is a refinement and an ease of manner about them that makes their acquaintance desirable and their society pleasant. They come up to town once or twice a year, and visit largely amongst their friends in the different counties of England; and belonging to what may, for want of a better term, be called the upper-middle classes of society, there is yet nothing in their language or bearing to define their position or indicate their precise rank. They will read the same books, hear much the same talk that every one else hears, and, having connections "up and down along the scale of ranks," acquire insensibly an ease of manner that has its basis in self-respect and a modest independence of, and indifference to, other folks' grandeur. But in Germany there are no smiling villages where squire and parson and lord of the manor meet on terms of friendly equality; no big red-brick houses with paddocks and shrubberies and brilliant gardens; no trim villas

with closely shaven lawns, geometrical flower-beds, and a "man and a maid" to keep things going. Germany is a thinly populated country: the scattered villages are mere assemblages of huts, dismally huddled together. The *Pächter*, or tenant farmers, may have a smart, trim abode, and the *Bauer*, not, as is often supposed, the patient, plodding "peasant," but a sort of yeoman farmer, tilling his own little plot, has doubtless gold and silver and linen galore cunningly secreted in chests and presses after the manner of his kind in other countries. And there, too, is the parson; but neither he nor any one else thinks of model cottages, draining, window-gardening, or the like. In short, *there is no one to think of it*. The farmer is usually a greedy, grasping, extortionate man; the *Bauer* much the same; the parson, a farmer like the rest, is very like the rest, as we shall see elsewhere, in other matters. The lord of the soil is a great noble; the estate is twenty, thirty, forty miles in circumference, and his well-tilled acres bring him in a vast revenue. He comes occasionally for the shooting, and his stewards and bailiffs transact the necessary business of the estate with him. The ladies of the family are at Berlin or Vienna, Ischl or Baden; some of them are, perhaps, "placed" about the court; what have they in common with the woman-kind of such lumbering, uncouth clods as these? Now and again, with a trampling of horses and a blowing of trumpets, they arrive, dimly magnificent through a whirlwind of dust and fanfaronade. The people on the estate pause with apathetic wonder in their monotonous work, and gaze up out of the vast, brown, hedgeless fields as though the gods had flashed by that way. On Sunday the family pew, which is like a great opera-box, will be furnished, and the *gräfliche Familie* will yawn through the squalid service. The parson, before he begins his discourse, will bow to the sublimities in the opera-box, and perhaps, if the countess be bored beyond endurance, he may be fetched up to the *Schloss* during the afternoon to make up a second whist-party, and play unlimited "robbers" into the small hours of Monday morning.

From the foregoing it will be readily understood why it is that German women can know nothing of the charm of country life. There is no such thing as country life, as we understand it, in Germany; no cosy sociability, smiling snugness, pleasant bounties and hospitalities; and above all, for the young folk, no free-

dom, flirtation, boatings, sketchings, high teas, scamperings, and merriments generally. "Society" in small towns is necessarily very restricted; commercial people (these have hitherto been generally Jews) visiting amongst each other; professors and professional men's families forming another circle; whilst "society" proper, consisting of officers' families, of those "placed" about the court, of the higher civil functionaries, with a scattering of the *noblesse* unattached, who prefer living in town, or have retired from active service, regard all outside their own exclusive circle with supreme indifference, not to say contempt.

Years pass: the young girl is no longer so very young; her friends are beginning to be anxious; a suitable *parti* must be found. She has not much choice. She must marry an officer, or an *employé* as high in office as may be. This is no case of curates and croquet; or of barristers and Badminton; archery-meetings and government clerks, and a villa at Putney. Clergymen are *nowhere* in German "society" — barristers impracticable (for matrimonial purposes), and of bankers, merchants, and commercial people generally out of the big towns, there can be no question. Nevertheless a marriage is arranged; but first there is the knotty point of the "caution" to be settled. A "caution" in its Transatlantic sense must not here be presupposed. A "caution" in the Teuto-technical sense is the sum of fifteen thousand thalers (more or less, according to the grade of the intending benedick), to be deposited, if the lover be, as he is almost sure to be, a military man, in government funds, by the contracting parties, so that should the husband be killed in the service of his country, or die an inglorious death at home, the widow may have a sufficiency upon which to live *standesgemäss*, or in a manner befitting her position. There are, however, not very many young couples who can deposit this sum, so that what with money-difficulties and the scarcity of suitors, the young lady has a somewhat uncertain time of it until fate and the "caution" smile propitious.

The betrothed couple are, however, not much nearer than they were before: they are never allowed to be alone together. They put on their best clothes and go about paying visits, and the poor old *Frau Mama* toddles panting after them, always keeping the young folks well in view. This may, perhaps, account for the singular manners and customs of lovers in Ger-

many; their demonstrative familiarities being quite calculated to terrify a shy person into apoplexy. The betrothal is, on the whole, a more important affair than the wedding.

The evening before the marriage — the *Polterabend*, as it is called — a singular ceremony takes place; all the friends of the bride's family go to her house, unlimited coffee and cakes and *Bowle* are consumed; people arrive in costume, place is made for them, and they repeat appropriate and inappropriate verses, original or borrowed, whilst they present their gifts. Clatter and confusion reign; it is a relief if dancing vary the scene, which generally closes with speechifying, toasting, and rather indiscriminate allusions of the pointedly personal character. Having brought our young friend so far along love's flowery way, we will pause, hoping to meet her again before long in all the added dignity and lustre of matronhood.

It will be understood from the foregoing that German marriages, though not concluded in the altogether conventional manner of the French, have still a vast deal less of sentiment and a great deal more of calculation about them than the "gushing" character of the nation might lead us to expect. The German has many points of resemblance with the Scotchman: he is "canny" and long-headed, prudent and frugal; he is sentimental, but not carried away by sentiment. "*Wenn der Deutsche schenkt,*" says Goethe, "*liebt er gewiss!*"

For the maiden lady of noble family foresight has provided the refuge of the *Stift*. A *Stiftsdame* has a recognized and official position in society: she wears her *order* across the breast or on the shoulder of her black silk gown, in the "world;" and lives in a state of droning comfort when her leave of absence expires and she has to retire to her secular cloister. The Protestant *Stift* supplies (in a very advantageously amended form) the place of the Catholic convent. The Reformation, not knowing what to do with its superfluous spinsters, instituted the *Stift* or "Foundation for Noble Maidens." The foundation was made in this manner. A certain number of Protestant nobles, living within a given circuit, would become aware (*dans le temps*) of a number of marriageable, but not-likely-to-be-married daughters dwelling within their borders; thereupon they would come together, consult, compare, and resolve that each count or baron should contribute his thousand thalers (more or less) towards the purchase of lands; that

the sum thus invested should give each depositing party a presentation in perpetuity to the so-called *Stift*. A house or houses would be forthwith bought or built; forests, fisheries, farms, added thereto; an overseer or intendant appointed; an abbess or prioress nominated (probably the lady of most distinguished descent amongst the nobles contributing); the land would be farmed, the *Stift* supplied with every sort of produce, the accounts audited by one or other of the founders, and for all time a comfortable, nay, in many cases a luxurious retreat be provided for such maidens as were doomed to fade suitorless into the sere and yellow. It will easily be understood that in many cases the land purchased at a few shillings per acre has, in the course of years, risen to an immense value; that many of these *stifts* have become extremely wealthy, and that, so far as material comfort goes, they leave nothing to be desired. The rule is a secular one; in all cases the ladies are allowed to go into "society;" leave of absence for three or six months yearly is granted; marriage is quite a possibility; friends are received with hospitality, even with profusion; a sitting and bedroom, and a personal attendant is apportioned to each lady; and though in some cases meals have to be partaken of in common, and permission asked of the prioress or abbess to take drives into the country or a walk into the village, yet severity of the rule cannot be complained of. On the other hand, there is often a pettiness of tone, a narrowness of feeling, a personality, and a prejudice that makes life in such institutions a weariness. The meanest of all pride prevails; the snobbish elevation of rank and title-worship, that adulation of mere descent, that envy and detraction and rage for be-little-ing, which is, more or less, the poison of German society generally, and the special poison of all small, self-contained, self-occupied, self-adulating communities.

I have dwelt at some length on the system of prying and scandalizing that obtains in Germany, because it is a crying evil, one that cuts at the very root of all confidence, and peeps and whispers with a persistence worthy of a better cause; but I should be unfair, were I not to add, that it is done without any conscious malignity; out of *désœuvrement*, rather than of malice prepense; *pour passer le temps*, rather than to injure or destroy. Neither can it be possible that these ladies believe all the news they promulgate; nay, nor the half of it. It has not unfrequently happened to

the present writer to see the lady whose character had just been torn to tatters, or was in process of tearing, enter the room with unsuspecting confidence, and meet with the warmest of receptions. At first one is startled: upon reflection one understands that this system of "murdering characters to kill time," is after all mere amusement (for the murderers), and a clinging to use and wont.

It will be objected that there are narrow circles and parish politics everywhere, and that gossipry is not the exclusive privilege of the German. True, but it is only when for years and years the same local twaddle repeats itself, the same personalities and prying prevail, that the mischievous and offensive results become overpowering. It will be asked how it is, then, that young English ladies are so enthusiastic for Germany and the German life? Simply because they *are* English; free to take all that is pleasant, and there is much that *is* pleasant, nay, even precious in that life; untrammelled by all the social tyranny that cribs, cabins, and confines the ordinary German woman; bound by no obligation to do as others do; free to come, and go, and enjoy; not dreaming in their easy philosophy of life of the horror with which such comings and goings, sayings and doings, are regarded in strictly German circles, nor how loud the reprehension, how utter the condemnation, that watches and follows their unsuspecting footsteps. An English girl would revolt from the tyranny of small things that encompasses a German girl's life; she would start aside like a broken bow, rebel overtly, and probably prefer the life of a governess (and that is saying much), with a sense of work, and independence, and personal identity, to carry her onwards, to the dull routine of comparative comfort and superlative nonentity.

From Chambers' Journal.
OSTRICH-FARMING IN AFRICA.

WITHIN the last seven or eight years, an industry has sprung up at the Cape of Good Hope, which, on account of its novelty, and the important results it produces, is worthy of notice. It is that of keeping ostriches in a state of semi-domestication, for the sake of their feathers, which have latterly become more and more scarce, and consequently more valuable. From the Cape, the business of ostrich-farming has been introduced into South America,

where it is carried on with more or less success. But the best feathers are still those produced in the south of Africa.

Like many other important undertakings, ostrich-farming, if not actually the result of an accidental discovery, at least received a great impetus from an apparently trifling circumstance. A few years ago, one of the native traders in ostrich feathers and eggs, having more eggs than he could conveniently carry, left four or five of them in a cupboard adjoining a bakehouse in some Algerian village: on his return, about two months afterwards, he was surprised to find the broken shells of his ostrich eggs and a corresponding number of young ostrich chicks. The birds were, of course, dead, from want of attention; but the fact was undeniable that the fresh eggs of two months ago had, under the influence of the high temperature, actually produced fully developed chickens. This circumstance came to the knowledge of an officer of the French army, M. Crépu, who immediately perceived the practical results that might ensue from a careful following-up of the hint thus strangely given. He set to work to devise "artificial incubators," for the purpose of hatching ostrich eggs, while at the same time he procured some pairs of adult birds, with a view to rearing them in a state of semi-domestication.

It is needless here to enter into particulars of the difficulties M. Crépu had to encounter. Suffice it to say that, after many disappointments, he had the satisfaction of finding a live ostrich chick actually hatched in his apparatus; and thus his assiduous efforts were crowned with triumph. About fifty-three or fifty-four days is the full term of incubation, which may be slightly accelerated or retarded by a trifling change in the heat to which the eggs are subjected, although the smallest excess or want of heat beyond a certain limited range is fatal. But to such perfection have artificial incubators now been brought, that the whole "sitting" of eggs may be hatched with more certainty than if left to the natural care of the parents.

The baby chick when it makes its *début* is about the size of a small common fowl, and begins to pick up food at once. The nature of the food suitable for both the brood and the adults was a principal difficulty in the first attempts at the artificial breeding of the ostrich; but a careful study of the habits of the birds in a wild state has resulted in the discovery of the best kind of diet suited for the welfare of

their domesticated brethren. The principal food given to the young birds is lucerne and thistles, and tender herbs and grasses indigenous to the country. Old birds are fed on more matured shrubs and plants, the leaves of which they strip off with their beaks. They are also fed on Indian corn, known at the Cape as "mealies."

It will be interesting to note that when the full number of eggs has been laid, the old birds invariably place one or two of them *outside* the nest—the nest consisting naturally of a hollow scooped out of the sand by the action of the legs and wings of the birds. It has been found that these eggs are reserved as food for the chicks, which are often reared, in a natural state, miles away from a blade of grass or other food. As soon as the chicks emerge from the shell, the parent ostrich breaks one of these eggs, and the yolk is eagerly eaten up by the young ones. They are, therefore, both herbivorous and carnivorous; but it is not necessary to gratify their appetite for flesh, as they thrive excellently on the herbs above mentioned. Of course, where food is supplied in abundance, this precaution on the part of the parent birds of providing meat for their offspring is not necessary, and each egg so left is therefore wasted. Considerable loss also occurs in the number of addled eggs, when they are left to be hatched by the parents. It is said that the ostrich is able to discover when an egg becomes addled, and that it immediately ejects it from the nest; thus showing an amount of wisdom which has hardly been attributed to a bird which is popularly supposed to thrust its head into a bush, when being hunted, in the vain hope that, as it cannot see, it cannot be seen by, its pursuer.

These observations were first made in Algeria, but it is at the Cape that they have been turned to practical account, and a very perfect system of ostrich-farming has been established there. Different practices prevail at different establishments. The birds are allowed occasionally to sit; but the success which has attended the use of artificial contrivances is so great, that fewer losses occur by this means than under natural circumstances, and the use of incubators is becoming very general. The chicks produced are so healthy as to show that they do not suffer from this mode of treatment.

The general arrangement of ostrich-farms is very similar in all cases. The *desiderata* are plenty of space, suitable

soil—that is, sand and pasture with facilities for growing the proper food—conveniences for shelter and water. A well-conducted "farm" would require perhaps £3,000 capital to begin in a small way. The industry at the Cape is barely eight years old, and much has to be learned by a beginner; loss and disappointment are frequently experienced at first; but the occupation is considered a very profitable one, and is certainly healthy and agreeable; yet nowhere are patience, sagacity, and perseverance more necessary than in the conduct of a good ostrich-farm.

A healthy bird of a week old is worth £10; at three months it will be worth £15; and at six months, £30 and more. Feathers may be plucked from the ostrich when a year old, and each year's crop will be worth about £17 per bird. At five years, the breeder begins to pair his birds, and each pair will yield from eighteen to twenty-four eggs in a season. It is necessary to keep the adult birds in separate paddocks, which are generally surrounded by wire-fencing. The ostrich is liable to sudden fits of jealousy. In such a case, frequent quarrels would ensue if the birds were all together in one inclosure, with the result, if not of black eyes, at least of damaged feathers, and perhaps broken legs, and even death to one of the combatants. The blow from the leg of the ostrich has been computed to be fully equal to the force developed by the kick of a colt seven months old. But whatever be the exact force produced, it is very severe, sufficiently so to break a man's leg.

The ostrich, however, both male and female, is quite an exemplary parent, notwithstanding the popular rumour that, like the crocodile, it leaves its eggs in the sand, to be hatched simply by the action of solar heat. Father and mother take it in turn to sit on the eggs, and when the ostrich takes his female companions out for their evening promenade in the desert, one of them always remains by the nest. This fact is sufficient to induce many breeders to leave the eggs to be hatched in the natural way, and merely to devote their energies to the rearing of the young birds and the collection of the feathers.

These are operations which require very great care. Regular supplies of food—about two pounds a day to each adult—are necessary, shelter must be provided for the night, and to shield the birds from the violent storms which frequently burst over the southern part of Africa; and there must be supplies of sand or pebbles, which the

birds swallow, as aids to digestion. Pepsine is unknown among those birds of the desert, and they introduce a quantity of hard substances into their gizzard, to assist them in grinding up their food; just as the dyspeptic featherless biped takes his morning bitters to help the secretion of the gastric juices. It is very amusing to watch the flock of young birds as the attendant enters to scatter their breakfast. The moment he appears with his load of "green-meat," the youngsters of the ostrich family trot up to the entrance, and caper and dance about in the most grotesque manner, and devour their food with evident relish. They are generally tame, and to a certain extent tractable; but as they grow old they sometimes evince a sourness of temper which is anything but encouraging to the formation of a near acquaintance with them.

As the feathers are picked they are sorted according to their quality and purity of colour. The pure whites from the wings are called "bloods," the next quality, "prime whites;" "firsts;" "seconds;" and so on. The tail feathers are not so valuable, and the more irregular the markings of the coloured varieties, the less

valuable are they. "Bloods" will fetch from forty to fifty pounds sterling per pound-weight in the wholesale market; and from this price they range as low as five shillings per pound.

The quality of the feathers produced by tame ostriches is fully equal to the best collected from "wild" birds, while the general average is much higher. Notwithstanding the increasing yield, prices are rising instead of falling; indeed, good ostrich feathers are now thrice as dear as they were fifteen years ago. But it is more than probable that as the production increases the price will eventually fall. Even with reduced prices, the profits would be sufficiently large to render ostrich-farming a very profitable undertaking, and, as each year will increase the experience of breeders, the difficulties will be gradually diminished, and losses more easily avoided. As it is, this strange industry—the domestication of the wild birds of the desert, once regarded as types of liberty and intractability—is at the same time one of the most interesting and most profitable of the African trader.

THE *Times* correspondent at Shanghai gives some interesting details of the latest advances towards western civilization attempted by the Japanese. The first and most important is the effort, which really appears to be made with some adaptive skill as well as prudence, to introduce parliamentary institutions into Japan. An Assembly and a Senate have been constituted at Yeddo. The former was opened by the mikado in person on the 20th of June; it is not founded on a representative basis, nor has it legislative power, though it is believed that the leaders of the Japanese Liberals aim at ultimately giving it both the one and the other. They understand, however, and it is very creditable to them if they do, that "the chasm which divides feudalism from popular government cannot be passed at a leap." The new Assembly is, therefore, merely a gathering of the provincial governors or prefects at Yeddo, with the privilege of originating and discussing such projects of law as may occur to them or be submitted to them by the government. The mikado in his "speech from the throne" explained the views of his ministers. He said:—

Our object in opening in person this the Provincial Parliament has been to secure by its means the thorough

discussion of all matters affecting the interior economy of our empire, and to secure to the provinces adequate representation. You have been convoked for this purpose, and in order that your knowledge of the condition and feeling of the people of your several districts may aid you in discussing their requirements and introducing such reforms and changes as may seem to you to be most urgently demanded. It is our wish that your deliberations should be marked by general harmony, and that, sinking minor differences, they should tend to promote the ends in view in calling you together. If with one mind you adhere steadily to this course, your conduct will be surely productive of the general welfare, and thus your deliberations may become the foundation of the eternal well-being of the empire.

These observations are commonplace enough in themselves, but in the mouth of a potentate who only a few years ago was almost worshipped as a manifestation of the Deity, and was shrouded jealously from vulgar eyes, they are very significant. The Senate, the *Times* correspondent writes, "was opened on July 5, also by the mikado in person, and with the same state and ceremony. Its functions are much more ambitious than the Assembly's, but no such precise definition of them has yet been made public." Another novelty, imitative of European conditions and pointing to the growth of a new power in the community, is a press-law of a rather rigorous type.